GRANDISON.

THE

HISTORY

OF

SIR CHARLES GRANDISON;

IN A

SERIES OF LETTERS.

BY MR. SAMUEL RICHARDSON,

AUTHOR OF PAMELA AND CLARISSA.

IN SEVEN VOLUMES.

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THE HISTORY OF SIR CHARLES GRANDISON, BART.

LETTER I.

SIR CHARLES GRANDISON TO DR. BARTLETT.

Mansfield-house, Thursday, September 14.

YOU will be so good, my dear friend, as to let my neighbours, particularly the gentlemen you mention, know, that the only reason I forbear paying my compliments to them, now I am so near, is, because I cannot as yet enjoy their company with that freedom and ease which I hope in a little while to do. Tell them, that I purpose, after some particular affairs are determined (which will for a little while longer engross me) to devote the greatest part of my time to my native place; and that then I will endeavour to make myself as good a neighbour, and as social a friend, as they can wish me to be.

On Sunday I had a visit from the two Hartleys.

They gave me very satisfactory proofs of what they were able, as well as willing, to do, in support of the right of the Mansfields to the estate of which they have been despoiled, and shewed me a paper, which nobody thought was in being, of the utmost consequence in the cause.

On Monday, by appointment, I attended Sir John Lambton. Two lawyers of the Keelings were with him. They gave in their demands. I had mine ready; but theirs were so extravagant, that I would not produce them: but, taking Sir John aside, I love not, said I, to affront men of a profession; but I am convinced, that we never shall come to an understanding, if we consider ourselves as lawyers and clients. I am no lawyer; but I know the strength of my friends cause, and will risque half my estate upon the justice of it. The Mansfields will commission *me*, if the Keelings will *you;* and we perhaps may do something: if not, let the law take its course. I am now come to reside in England. I will do nothing for myself, till I have done what *can* be done to make all my friends easy.

Sir John owned, that he thought the Mansfields had hardships done them. Mr. Keeling senior, he said, had heard of the paper in the Hartleys hands; and, praising his honesty, told me, in confidence, that he had declared, that if such a paper could have been produced in time, he would not have prosecuted the suit, which he had carried. But Sir John said, that the younger Keeling was a furious young man, and would oppose a compromise on the terms he supposed the Mansfields would expect to be complied with. But what are your proposals, Sir?

These, Sir John: The law is expensive; delays may be meditated; appeals may be brought, if we gain our point.—What I think it may cost us to establish the right of the injured, which cannot be

a small sum, that will I prevail upon the Mansfields to give up to the Keelings. I will trust you, if you give me your honour, with our proofs; and if you and your friends are satisfied with them, and will consent to establish our right by the form only of a new trial; then may we be agreed: otherwise, not. And I leave you and them to consider of it. I shall hear from you within two or three days. Sir John promised I should; but hoped to have some talk first with the Hartleys, with whom, as well as with me, he declared he would be upon honour.

Friday evening.

I had a message from Sir John last night, requesting me to dine with him and the elder Mr. Keeling this day; and to bring with me the two Mr. Hartleys, and the proofs I had hinted at.

Those gentlemen were so obliging, as to go with me; and took the important paper with them, which had been deposited with their grandfather, as a common friend, and contained a recognition of the Mansfields right to the estates in question, upon an amicable reference to persons long since departed: an attested copy of which was once in the Mansfields possession, as by a memorandum that came to hand; but which never could be found. The younger Keeling was not intended to be there; but he forced himself upon us. He behaved very rudely. I had once like to have forgotten myself. This meeting produced nothing: but as the father is a reasonable man; as we have obtained a re-hearing of the cause; as he is much influenced by Sir John Lambton, who seems convinced; and to whose honour I have submitted an abstract of our proofs; I am in hopes that we shall be able to accommodate.

I have Bolton's proposals before me. The first child is dead; the second cannot live many months

He trembles at the proofs he knows we have of his villany. He offers, on the death of this second child, to give us possession of the estate, and a large sum of money (but thought not to be half of what the superannuated Calvert left) if we will give him general releases. The wretch is not, we believe, married to the relict of Calvert.

I am loth, methinks, to let him escape the justice which his crimes call for: but such are the delays and chicaneries of the law, when practisers are found who know how to perplex an honest pursuer; and as we must have recourse to low and dirty people to establish our proofs; the vile fellow shall take with him the proposed spoils: they may not be much more than would be the lawyers part of the estate, were we to push the litigation.

As to our poor Everard, nothing, I fear, can be done for him, with the men who are revelling on *his* spoils. I have seen one of them. The unhappy man has signed and sealed to his own ruin. He regrets, that a part of the estate which has been so long in the family and name, should go out of it. What an empty pride is that of name! The general tenor of his life was not a credit to it; though he felt not that, till he felt distress. The disgrace is actually incurred. Does not all the world know his loss, and the winners triumph? And if the world did *not*, can he conceal from himself those vices, the consequences of which have reduced him to what he is? But perhaps the unhappy man puts a value upon the name, in compliment to me.

Mention not to him what I write. The poor man is sensible enough of his folly, to engage pity: whether from a right sense, or not, must be left to his own heart.

As to the woman's claim: What in honour can I do, against a promise that he owns may be proved

upon him? He did not condition with her, that she was to be a spotless woman. If he thought she was so when he solicited her to yield to his desires, he is the *less* to be excused: vile as she comes out to be, he had proposed to make her as vile, if he had found her not so. He promised her marriage: meant he only a promise? *She* is punished in being what she *is*: *his* punishment cannot be condign, but by his being obliged to perform his promise. Yet I cannot bear to think, that my cousin Grandison should be made, for life, the dupe of a successful and premeditated villany; and the less, as, in all likelihood, the profligate Lord B. would continue to himself, from the merit with her of having vindicated her claim, an interest in the bad woman's favour, were she to be the wife of our poor Everard.

But certainly this claim must be prosecuted with a view only to extort money from my cousin; and they know him to be of a family jealous of its honour. I think she must be treated with for releases. I could not bear to appear in such a cause as this, in open court, in support of my cousin, against a promise made by him. He is of age, and thought to be no novice in the ways of the town. I am mistaken in Mr. Grandison's spirit, if it do not lead him to think himself very severely punished, (were he to have no *other* punishment) by the consequence of those vices which will bring an expence upon *me*.

But if I should be able to extricate the unhappy man from this difficulty, what can next be done for him? the poor remains of his fortune will not support one who has always lived *more* than genteelly. Will he be able, think you, to endure the thoughts of living in a constant state of dependence, however easy and genteel I should endeavour to make it to him? There may be many ways (in the public offices, for example) of providing for a broken trades-

man: but for a man who calls himself, and is, a gentleman; who will expect, as such, to rank with his employer; who knows nothing of figures, or business of any kind; who has been brought up in idleness, and hardly knows the meaning of the word *diligence;* and never could bear confinement; what can be done for such a one in the public offices, or by any other employment that requires punctual attendance?

But to quit this subject, for a more agreeable one. I have for some time had it in my thoughts to ask you, my dear friend, whether your nephew is provided for to *your* liking and his *own?* If not, and he would put it in *my* power to serve *him*, by serving *myself*, I should be obliged to *you* for permitting him so to do, and to *him*, for his consent. I would not affront him, by the offer of a salary: my presents to him shall be such as befit the services done:—sometimes as my amanuensis; sometimes as a transcriber and methodizer of papers and letters; sometimes in adjusting servants accounts, and fitting them for my inspection. You need not fear my regard to *myself* in my acknowledgments to be made to *him* (that, I know, will be all your fear); for I have always considered profusion and parsimony as two extremes, equally to be avoided. You, my dear Dr. Bartlett, have often enforced this lesson on my mind. Can it then ever be forgotten by

Your affectionate friend and servant,

CHARLES GRANDISON.

LETTER II.

SIGNOR JERONYMO DELLA PORRETTA TO SIR CHARLES GRANDISON.

Bologna, Monday, September 15, N. S.

'Your kind letters from Lyons, my dearest friend, rejoiced us extremely. Clementina languished to hear from you. How was it possible for you to write with so much warmth of affection to her, yet with so much delicacy, that a rival could not have taken exceptions at it?

She writes to you. It is not for me, it is not for any of us, I think, to say one word to the principal subject of her letter. She shewed it to me, and to her mother, only.

Dear creature! *Could* she but be prevailed upon!—But how can *you* be asked to support the family-wishes? Yet if you think them just, I know you will. You know not *self*, when justice and the service of your friend stand in opposition to it. All that I am afraid of, is, that we shall be too precipitate for the dear creature's head.

Would to God, you could have been my brother! That was the first desire of my heart!—But you will see by her letter (the least flighty that she has written of a long time) that she has no thoughts of that: and she declares to us, that she wishes you happily married to an English woman. Would to Heaven, we might plead *your* example to *her!*

I will certainly attend you in your England.—If one thing, that we all wish, could happen, you would have the whole family, as far as I know. We think, we talk, of nobody but you. We look out for Englishmen, to do them honour for your sake.

Mrs. Beaumont is with us. Surely she is your

near relation. She advises caution; but thinks that our present measures are not wrong ones, as we never can give into my sister's wishes to quit the world. Dear Grandison! love not Mrs. Beaumont the less for her opinion in our favour.

Mr. Lowther writes to you: I say nothing, therefore, of that worthy man.

I am wished to write more enforcingly to you, on a certain important subject: but I say, I cannot, dare not, will not.

Dear Grandison, love still your Jeronymo! Your friendship makes life worthy of my wish. It has been a consolation to me, when every other failed, and all around me was darkness, and the shadow of death. You will often be troubled with letters from me. My beloved, my dearest friend, my Grandison, adieu!

JERONYMO DELLA PORRETTA.

LETTER III.

LADY CLEMENTINA TO SIR CHARLES GRANDISON.

Bologna, Monday, September 15. N. S.

How welcome to me was your letter from Lyons! My good Chevalier Grandison, my heart thanks you for it: yet it was possible that heart could have been still more thankful, had I not observed in your letter an air of pensiveness, though it is endeavoured to be concealed. What pain would it give me to know, that you suffer on my account!—But no more in this strain: a complaining one must take place.

O chevalier, I am persecuted! And by whom? By my dearest, my nearest friends. I was afraid it would be so. Why would you deny me your in-

fluence, when I importuned you for it? Why would you not stay among us, till you saw me professed? Then had I been happy—In *time*, I should have been happy!—Now am I beset with entreaties, with supplications, from those who ought to command;—yet unlawfully, if they did: I presume to think so: since parents, though they ought to be consulted in the change of condition, as to the *person;* yet surely should not oblige the child to marry, who chooses to be single all her life. A more cogent reason may be pleaded, and I do plead it to my relations, as Catholics, since I wish for nothing so much as to assume the veil.—But you are a Protestant: you favour not a divine dedication, and would not plead for me. On the contrary, you have strengthened their hands!—O chevalier! how could you do so, and ever love me! Did you not know, there was but one way to escape the grievous consequences of the importunities of those who justly lay claim to my obedience?—And they *do* claim it.

And in what forcible manner, claim it!—Shall I tell you? Thus, then: My father, with tears in his eyes, beseeches me! My mother gently reminds me of what she has suffered for me in my illness; and declares, that it is in my power to make the rest of her days happy: nor shall she think my own tranquillity of mind secured, till I oblige her!—O chevalier, what pleas are these from a father, whose eyes plead more strongly than words; and from a mother, on whose bright days I have cast a cloud!—The bishop pleads: How can a catholic bishop plead, and not for me? The general declares, that he never wooed his beloved wife for her consent with more fervour than he does me for mine, to oblige them all. Nay, Jeronymo! Blush, sisterly love! to say it—Jeronymo, your friend Jeronymo, is solicitous

on the same side—Even Father Marescotti is carried away by the example of the bishop.—Mrs. Beaumont argues with me in their favour—And Camilla, who was ever full of your praises, teases me continually.

They name not the man: they pretend to leave me free to choose through the world. They plead, that, zealous as they are in the catholic faith, they were *so* earnest for me to enter into the state, that they were desirous to see me the wife even of a Protestant, rather than I should remain single: and they remind me, that it was owing to *my* scruple only, that this was not effected.—But why will they weaken, rather than strengthen my scruple? Could I have got over three points—The sense of my own unworthiness, after my mind had been disturbed; the *insuperable* apprehension, that, drawn aside by your love, I should probably have ensnared my own soul; and that I should be perpetually lamenting the certainty of the loss of his whom it would be my duty to love as my own; their importunity would hardly have been wanted.

Tell me, advise me, my good chevalier, my fourth brother [you are not now *interested* in the debate] if I may not lawfully stand out? Tell me, as I know that I cannot answer their views, except I marry, and yet cannot consent to marry, whether I may not as well sequester myself from the world, and *insist* upon so doing?

What *can* I do?—I am distressed—O thou, my *brother*, my friend, whom my heart ever must hold dear, advise me! To you I have told them I will appeal. They are so good as to promise to suspend their solicitations, if I will hold suspended my thoughts of the veil till I have your advice.—But give it not against me—If you ever valued Clementina, *give it not against her!*

LETTER IV.

SIR CHARLES GRANDISON TO LADY CLEMENTINA.

London, Monday, September 18—29.

WHAT can I say, most excellent of women, to the contents of the letter you have honoured me with? What a task have you imposed upon me! You take great, and, respecting your intentions, I will call it *kind* care, to let me know that I can have no *interest* in the decision of the case you refer to me. I repeat my humble acquiescence; but must again declare, that it would have been next to impossible to do so, had you not made a point of conscience of your scruples.

But what weight is my advice likely to have with a young lady, who repeatedly, in the close of her letter, desires me not to give it *for* her parents?

I, madam, am *far* from being unprejudiced in this case: for, can the man who once himself hoped for the honour of your hand, advise you against marriage?—Are not your parents generously indulgent, when they name not any particular person to you? I applaud both their wisdom and their goodness, on this occasion. Possibly you *guess* the man whom they would recommend to your choice: and I am sure, Lady Clementina would not refuse their recommendation merely because it was *theirs*. Nor indeed upon any less reason than an unconquerable aversion, or a preference to some other Catholic. A Protestant, it seems, it *cannot* be.

But let me ask my sister, my friend, What answer can I return to the lady who had shewn, in *one* instance, that she had not an insuperable aversion to matrimony; yet, on conscientious reasons, refusing

one man, and not particularly favouring any, can scruple to oblige (*obey* is not the word they use) 'a father, who with tears in his eyes beseeches her; a mother who gently reminds her of what she has suffered for her; who declares, that it is in her power to make the rest of her days happy; and who urges a still stronger plea, respecting them both, and the whole family, to engage the attention of the beloved daughter?—O madam, what pleas are those [let me still make use of your own pathetic words] from a father whose eyes plead more strongly than words! and from a mother, over whose bright days you had (though involuntarily) cast a cloud!—Your brother the bishop, a man of piety; your confessor, a man of equal piety; your two other brothers, your disinterested friend Mrs. Beaumont; your faithful Camilla;' all wholly disinterested.—What an enumeration against yourself.—Forbidden, as I am, to give the cause *against* you, what can I say? Dearest Lady Clementina, can I, on your own representation, give it *for* you?

You know, madam, the sacrifice I have made to the plea of *your* conscience, not *my* own. I make no doubt, but parents so indulgent as yours will yield to your reasons, if you can plead *conscience* against the performance of the *filial duty*; the more a duty, as it is so gently urged: nay, hardly urged; but by tears, and wishes, which the eyes, not the lips, express; and which if you will perform, your parents will think themselves under an obligation to their child.

Lady Clementina is one of the most generous of women: but consider, madam, in this instance of preferring your own will to that of the most indulgent of parents, whether there is not an apparent selfishness, inconsistent with your general character, even were you to be as happy in a convent, as you

propose. Would you not, in that case, live to yourself, and renounce your parents and family, as parts of that world which you would vow to despise?—'Dear lady! I asked you once before, Is there any thing sinful in a sacrament? Such all good Catholics deem matrimony. And shall I ask you, whether, as self-denial is held to be meritorious in your church, there is not a merit in denying yourself in the case before us, when you can, by performing the filial duty, oblige your whole family?

Permit me to say, that, though a Protestant, I am not an enemy to such foundations in general. I could wish, under proper regulations, that we had nunneries among us. I would not, indeed, have the obligation upon nuns be perpetual: let them have liberty, at the end of every two or three years, to renew their vows, or otherwise, by the consent of friends. Celibacy in the clergy is an indispensable law of your church: yet a cardinal has been allowed to lay down the purple, and marry. You know, madam, I must mean Ferdinand of Medicis. Family-reasons, in that case, preponderated, as well at Rome, as at Florence.

Of all the women I know, Lady Clementina della Porretta should be the last who should be earnest to take the veil. There can be but two persons in the world, besides herself, who will not be grieved at her choice. We know *their* reasons. The will of her grandfathers, now with God, is against her; and her living parents, and every other person of her family, those *two* excepted, would be made unhappy, if she sequestered herself from the world, and them. Clementina has charity: she wishes, she once said, to take a great revenge upon Laurana. Laurana has something to repent of: let *her* take the veil. The fondness she has for the world, a fondness which could make her break through all the ties of relation

and humanity, requires a check: but are any of those in convents more pious, more exemplarily pious, than Clementina is out of them?

Much more could I urge on the same side of the question; but what I *have* urged has been a *task* upon me; a task which I could not have performed, had I not preferred to my own, the happiness of you and your family.

May both earthly and heavenly blessings attend your determination, whatever it be, prays, dearest madam,

Your ever-faithful friend,
Affectionate brother, and humble servant,
CHARLES GRANDISON.

LETTER V.

SIR CHARLES GRANDISON TO SIGNOR JERONYMO DELLA PORRETTA.

London, Monday, September 18—29.

I HAVE written, my beloved friend, to Lady Clementina; and shall inclose a copy of my letter.

I own, that, till I received hers, I thought there was a possibility, though not a probability, that she might change her mind in my favour. I *foresaw* that you would all join, for family-reasons, to press her to marry: and when, thought I, she finds herself very earnestly urged, it is possible, that she will forego her scruples, and, proposing some conditions for herself, will honour with her hand the man whom she has avowedly honoured with a place in her heart, rather than any other. The malady she has been afflicted with, often leaves, for some time, an unsteadiness in the mind: my absence, as I proposed

to settle in my native country, never more, perhaps, to return to Italy; the high notions she has of obligation and gratitude; her declared confidence in my honour and affection; all co-operating, she may thought I, change her mind; and, if she does, I cannot doubt the favour of her friends. It was not, my Jeronymo, presumptuous to *hope*. It was *justice* to Clementina to attend the event, and to wait for the promised letter: but now, that I see you are all of one mind, and that the dear lady, though vehemently urged by all her friends to marry some other man, can appeal to me, only as to her *fourth brother*, and a man *not interested* in the event—I give up all my hopes.

I have written accordingly to your dear Clementina; but it could not be expected, that I should give the argument all the weight that might be given it: yet, being of opinion that she was in duty obliged to yield to the entreaties of all her friends, I have been honest. But surely no man ever was involved in so many difficult situations as your Grandison; who yet never, by enterprize or rashness, was led out of the plain path into difficulties so uncommon.

You wish, my dear friend, that I would set an example to your excellent sister. I will unbosom my heart to you.

There *is* a lady, an English lady, beautiful as an angel, but whose beauty is her least perfection, either in my eyes, or her own: had I never known Clementina, I could have loved her, and *only* her, of all the women I ever beheld. It would not be doing her justice, if I could not say, I *do* love her; but with a flame as pure as the heart of Clementina, or as her own heart, can boast. Clementina's distressed mind affected me: I imputed her sufferings to her esteem for me. The farewell interview denied her, she demonstrated, I thought, so firm an affection for me,

at the same time that she was to me, what I may truly call, a first love; that, though the difficulties in my way seemed insuperable, I thought it became me, in honour, in gratitude, to hold myself in suspense, and not offer to make my addresses to any other woman, till the destiny of the dear Clementina was determined.

It would look like vanity in me to tell my Jeronymo how many proposals, from the partial friends of women of rank and merit superior to my own, I thought myself obliged, in honour to the ladies themselves, to decline: but my heart never suffered uneasiness from the uncertainty I was in of ever succeeding with your beloved sister, but on *this* lady's account. I presume not, however, to say, I could have succeeded, had I thought myself at liberty to make my addresses to her: yet, when I suffered myself to balance, because of my uncertainty with your Clementina, I had hopes from the interest my two sisters had with her (her affections disengaged), that, had I been at liberty to make my addresses to her, I might.

Shall I, my dear Jeronymo, own the truth?—The two noblest-minded women in the world, when I went over to Italy, on the invitation of my lord the bishop, held almost an equal interest in my heart; and I was thereby enabled justly, and with the greater command of myself, to declare to the marchioness, and the general, at my last going over, that I held myself bound to you; but that your sister, and you all, were free. But when the dear Clementina began to shew signs of recovery, and seemed to confirm the hopes I had of her partiality to me; and my gratitude and attachment seemed of importance to her complete restoration; then, my Jeronymo, did I content myself with wishing another husband to the English lady, more worthy of her

than my embarrassed situation could have made me. And when I farther experienced the condescending goodness of your whole family, all united in my favour; I had not a wish but for your Clementina.

What a disappointment, my Jeronymo, was her rejection of me!—obliged, as I was, to admire the noble lady the more for her *motives* of rejecting me.

And now, my dear friend, what is your wish?—That I shall set your sister an example? How can I? Is marriage in my power? There is but one woman in the world, now your dear Clementina has refused me, that I can think worthy of succeeding *her* in my affections, though there are thousands of whom I am not worthy. And will that lady accept of a man whose heart had been another's, and that other living, and single, and still honouring him with so much of her regard, as may be thought sufficient to attach a grateful heart, and occasion a divided love? Clementina herself is not more truly delicate than this lady. Indeed, Jeronymo, I am ready when I contemplate my situation, on a *supposition* of making my addresses to her, to give up myself, as the unworthiest of her favour of all the men I know; and she has for an admirer almost every man who sees her—Even Olivia admires her! Can I do justice to the merits of both, and yet not *appear* to be divided by a double love?—For I will own to all the world, my affection for Clementina; and, as once it was encouraged by her whole family, glory in it.

You see, my Jeronymo, how I am circumstanced. The example, I fear, must come from Italy; not from England. Yet say I not this for punctilio sake: it is not in my *power* to set it, as it is in your Clementina's: it would be presumption to suppose it is. Clementina has not an aversion to the *state*: she cannot to the *man* you have in view, since prepossession in favour of another is over.—This is a hard task upon me. I presume not to say what Clementina *will*,

what she *can* do: but she is naturally the most duti-ful of children, and has a high sense of the more than common obligations she owes to parents, to brothers, to whom she has as unhappily as involun-tarily given great distress: difference in religion, the motive of her rejecting *me*, is not in the question: filial duty is an article of religion.

I do myself the honour of writing to the mar-chioness, to the general, to Father Marescotti, and to Mr. Lowther. May the Almighty perfect your recovery, my Jeronymo; and preserve in health and spirits the dear Clementina!—and may every other laudable wish of the hearts of a family so truly excellent, be granted to them!—prays, my dearest Jeronymo, the friend who expects to see you in England; the friend who loves you, as he loves his own heart; and equally honours all of your name; and *will*, so long as he is

CHARLES GRANDISON.

LETTER VI.

MRS. REEVES TO MISS BYRON.

Tuesday, September 5.

O MY dear cousin! I am now sure you will be the hap-piest of women! Sir Charles Grandison made us a visit this very day.—How Mr. Reeves and I re-joiced to see him! We had but just before been called upon by a line from Lady G. to rejoice with her on her brother's happy arrival. He said, he was under obligation to go to Windsor and Hampshire, upon extraordinary occasions; but he could not go, till he had paid his respects to us, as well for our own sakes, as to enquire after your health. He had re-

ceived, he said, some disagreeable intimations in relation to it. We told him, you were not well; but we hoped not dangerously ill. He said so many kind, tender, yet respectful things of you—O my Harriet! I am sure, and so is Mr. Reeves, he loves you dearly. Yet we both wondered that he did not talk of paying you a visit. But he may have great matters in hand. But what matters can be so great as not to be postponed, if he loves you?—and that he certainly does. I should not have known how to contain my joy before him, had he declared himself your lover.

He condescendingly asked to see my little boy—Was not that very good of him? He would have won my heart by this condescension, had he not had a great share of it before—For *your* sake, my cousin. You know I cannot mean otherwise: and you know, that, except Mr. Reeves and my little boy, I love my Harriet better than any-body in the world. No-body in Northamptonshire, I am sure, will take exception at this.

I thought I would write to you of this kind visit. Be well, now, my dear: all things, I am sure, will come about for good:—God grant they may!—I dare say, he will visit you in Northamptonshire: and if he does, what can be his motive? *Not* mere friendship: Sir Charles Grandison is no trifler!

I know you will be sorry to hear that Lady Betty Williams is in great affliction. Miss Williams has run away with an ensign, who is not worth a shilling: he is, on the contrary, *over head and ears*, as the saying is, in debt. Such a mere girl!—But what shall we say?

Miss Cantillon has made as foolish a step. Lord bless me! I think girls, in these days, are bewitched. A nominal captain too! Her mother vows, they shall both starve, for her: and they have no other depend-

ence. She cannot live without her pleasures; neither can he without his. A Ranelagh fop. Poor wretches! What will become of them? For everything is in her mother's power, as to fortune.—She has been met by Miss Allestree; and looked *so* shy! *so* silly! *so* slatternly! Unhappy coquettish thing!

Well, but God bless you, my dear!—My nursery calls upon me! The dear little soul is *so* fond of me! Adieu. Compliments to every-body I have so much reason to love: Mr. Reeves's too. Once more, Adieu.

ELIZA REEVES.

LETTER VII.

MISS BYRON TO MRS. REEVES.

Selby-house, Friday, September 8.

YOUR kind letter, my dear cousin, has, at the same time, delighted and pained me. I rejoice in the declared esteem of one of the best of men; and I honour him for his friendly love expressed to you and my cousin, in the visit he made you: but I am pained at your calling upon me (in pity to my weakness, shall I call it? a weakness so ill concealed) to rejoice, that the excellent man, when he has dispatched all his affairs of consequence, and has nothing *else* to do, may *possibly*, for you cannot be certain, make me a visit in Northamptonshire.—O my cousin! And were his absence, and the apprehension of his being the husband of another woman, think you, the *occasion* of my indisposition; that I must now, that the other affair seems determined in a manner so unexpected, be bid at once to be well?

Sir Charles Grandison, my dear cousin, may ho-

nour us with the *prognosticated* visit, or not, as he pleases: but were he to declare himself my lover, my heart would not be so joyful as you seem to expect, if Lady Clementina is to be unhappy. What though the refusal of marriage was hers; was not that refusal the greatest sacrifice that ever woman made to her superior duty? Does she not still avow her love to him? And *must* he not, *ought* he not, ever to love her? And here my pride puts in its claim to attention—Shall your Harriet sit down and think herself happy in a second-place love? Yet let me own to you, my cousin, that Sir Charles Grandison is dearer to me than all else that I hold most dear in this world: and if Clementina could be not *un*-happy [happy I have no notion she can be without him] and he were to declare himself my lover; affectation, be gone! I would say; I will trust to my own heart, and to my future conduct, to make for myself an interest in his affections, that should enrich my content; in other words, that should make me *more* than contented.

But time will soon determine my destiny: I will have patience to wait its determination. I make no doubt but he has sufficient reasons for all he does.

I am as much delighted, as you could be, at the notice he took of your dear infant. The brave must be humane: and what greater instance of humanity can be shewn, than for grown persons to look back upon the state they were once themselves in, with tenderness and compassion?

I am very sorry for the cause of Lady Betty's affliction. Pity! the good lady took not—But I will not be severe, after I have said, that childrens faults are not always *originally* their own.

Poor Miss Cantillon!—But she was not under age; and *as* her punishment was of her own choosing—I am sorry, however, for both. I hope, after they

have smarted, something will be done for the poor wretches. Good parents *will be* placable; bad ones, or such as have not given good examples, *ought to be* so.

God continue to you, my dear cousins both, your present comforts, and increase your pleasures! for all your pleasures are innocent ones! prays

Your ever-obliged and affectionate

HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER VIII.

MISS BYRON TO LADY G.

Selby-house, Wednesday, September 20.

MY DEAREST LADY G.

Do you know what is become of your brother? My grandmamma Shirley has seen his ghost: and talked with it near an hour; and then it vanished. Be not surprised, my dear creature. I am still in amaze at the account my grandmamma gives us of its appearance, discourse, and vanishing! Nor was the dear parent in a reverie. It happened in the middle of the afternoon, all in broad day.

Thus she tells it:—'I was sitting,' said she, 'in my own drawing-room, yesterday, by myself; when, in came James, to whom it first appeared, and told me, that a gentleman desired to be introduced to me. I was reading *Sherlock upon Death,* with that cheerfulness with which I always meditate the subject. I gave orders for his admittance; and in came, to appearance, one of the handsomest men I ever saw in my life, in a riding-dress. It was a courteous ghost: it saluted me; or at least I thought it did: for it answering to the description that you, my

Harriet, had given me of that amiable man, I was surprised. But, contrary to the manner of ghosts, it spoke first—Venerable lady, it called me; and said its name was Grandison, in a voice—so like what I had heard you speak of his, that I had no doubt but it was Sir Charles Grandison himself; and was ready to fall down to welcome him.

'It took its place by me: You, madam, it said, will forgive this intrusion: and it made several fine speeches, with an air *so* modest, *so* manly—It had almost all the talk to itself. I could only bow, and be pleased; for still I thought it was corporally, and indeed, Sir Charles Grandison. It said, that it had but a very little while to stay: it must reach, I don't know what place, that night—What, said I, will you not go to Selby-house? Will you not see my daughter Byron? Will you not see her aunt Selby? No, it desired to be excused. It talked of leaving a pacquet behind it; and seemed to pull out of its pocket a parcel of letters sealed up. It broke the seal, and laid the parcel on the table before me. It refused refreshment. It desired, in a courtly manner, an answer to what it had discoursed upon—Made a profound reverence—and—vanished.'

And now, my dear Lady G. let me repeat my question; What is become of your brother?

Forgive me, this light, this amusing manner. My grandmamma speaks of this visit as an appearance, so sudden, and so short, and nobody seeing him but she; that it gave a kind of amusing levity to my pen, and I could not resist the temptation I was under to surprise you, as he has done us all. How could he take such a journey, see nobody but my grandmamma, and fly the country? Did he do it to spare us, or to spare himself?

The direct truth is this: My grandmamma was sitting by herself, as above: James told her, as above,

that a gentleman desired to be introduced to her. He *was* introduced. He called himself by his own name; took her hand; saluted her—Your character, madam, and mine, said he, are so well known to each other, that though I never before had the honour of approaching you, I may presume upon your pardon for this intrusion.

He then launched out in the praises of your happy friend. With what delight did the dear, the indulgent parent repeat them from his mouth! I hope she mingled not her own partialities with them, whether I deserve them, or not; for sweet is praise, from those we wish to love us. And then he said, You see before you, madam, a man glorying in his affection to one of the most excellent of your sex; an Italian lady; the pride of Italy! And who, from motives which cannot be withstood, has rejected him, at the very time that, all her friends consenting, and innumerable difficulties overcome, he expected that she would yield her hand to his wishes—And they *were* his wishes. My *friendship* for the dear Miss Byron [*you* and *she* must *authorize* me to call it by a still dearer name, before I dare do it] is well known: that also has been my pride. I know too well what belongs to female delicacy in general, and particularly to that of Miss Byron, to address myself first to her, on the subject which occasions you this trouble. I am not accustomed to make professions, not even to ladies—Is it consistent with your notions of delicacy, madam? Will it be with Mr. and Mrs. Selby's; to give your interest in favour of a man who is thus situated? A rejected man! A man who dares to own, that the rejection was a disappointment to him; and that he tenderly loved the fair rejecter? If it will, and Miss Byron can accept the tender of a heart, that has been divided, unaccountably so (the circumstances,

I presume, you know) then will *you*, then will *she*, lay me under an obligation that I can only *endeavour* to repay by the utmost gratitude and affection.—But if not, I shall admire the delicacy of the *second* refuser, as I do the piety of the *first*, and, at least, *suspend* all thoughts of a change of condition.

Noblest of men—And my grandmamma was proceeding in high strains, but very sincere ones; when, interrupting her, and pulling out of his pocket the pacquet I mentioned above; I presume, madam, said he, that I see favour, and goodness to me, in your benign countenance: but I will not even be *favoured*, but upon your full knowledge of all the facts I am master of myself. I will be the guardian of the delicacy of Miss Byron and all her friends in this important case, rather than the discourager, though I were to suffer by it. You will be so good as to read these letters to your daughter Byron, to her Lucy, to Mr. and Mrs. Selby, and to whom else you will think fit to call to the consultation: they will be those, I presume, who already know something of the history of the excellent Clementina. If, on the perusal of them, I may be admitted to pay my respects to Miss Byron, consistently, as I hinted, with *her* notions and *yours* of that delicacy by which she was always directed, and at the same time be received with that noble frankness which has distinguished her in my eye above all women but one [excuse me, madam, I must always put these sister-souls upon an equal foot of excellence]; then shall I be a happier man than the happiest. Your answer, madam, by pen and ink, will greatly oblige me; and the more, the sooner I can be favoured with it; because, being requested by my friends abroad to set an example to their beloved Clementina, as you will see in more than one of these letters; I would avoid all punctilio, and let them

know, that I had offered myself to Miss Byron, and have not been mortified with absolute denial; if I may be so happy as to be allowed to write so.

Thus did this most generous of men prevent, by this reference to the letters, my grandmamma's heart overflowing to her lips. He should directly, he said, proceed on his journey to London; and was in such haste to be gone, when he had said what he had to say, that it precipitated a little my grandmamma's spirits: but the joy she was filled with, on the occasion, was so great, that she only had a concern upon her, when he was gone, as if something was left by her undone or unsaid, which she thought should have been said and done to oblige him.

The letters he left on the table were copies of what he wrote from Lyons to the marquis and marchioness, the bishop, the general, and Father Marescotti; as also to Lady Clementina, and her brother, the good Jeronymo*. That to the lady cannot be enough admired, for the tenderness, yet for the acquiescence with her will expressed in it. Surely they were born for each other, however it happens, that they are not likely to be united.

A letter from Signor Jeronymo, in answer to his from Lyons, I will mention next. In this Sir Charles is wished to use his supposed influence upon Lady Clementina (What a hard task upon him!) to dissuade her from the thoughts of going into a nunnery, and to resolve upon marriage†.

Next is a letter of Lady Clementina to Sir Charles, complaining tenderly of persecution from her friends, who press her to marry; while she contends to be allowed to take the veil, and applies to Sir Charles for his interest in her behalf.

The next is Sir Charles's reply to Lady Clementina.

* These letters are omitted in this collection. † See Letter ii.

Then follows a letter from Sir Charles to Signor Jeronymo. I have copied these three last, and inclose them in confidence*.

By these you will see, my dear, that the affair between this excellent man and woman is entirely given up by both; and also, in his reply to Signor Jeronymo, that your Harriet is referred to as his next choice. And how can I ever enough value him, for the dignity he has given me, in putting it, as it should seem, in my power to lay an obligation upon him; in making for me my own scruples; and now, lastly, in the method he has taken in the application to my grandmamma, instead of to me; and leaving all to our determination? But thus should the men give dignity, even for their own sakes, to the women whom they wish to be theirs. Were there more Sir Charles Grandisons, would not even the female world (much better, as I hope it is, than the male) be amended?

My grandmamma, the moment Sir Charles was gone, sent to us, that she had some very agreeable news to surprise us with; and therefore desired the whole family of us, her Byron particularly, to attend her at breakfast, the next morning. We looked upon one another, at the message, and wondered. I was not well, and would have excused myself; but my aunt insisted upon my going. Little did I or any-body else think of your brother having visited my grandmamma in person. When she acquainted us that he *had*, my weakened spirits wanted support: I was obliged to withdraw with Lucy.

I thought I could not bear, when I recovered myself, that he should be so near, and not *once* call in, and enquire after the health of the creature for whom he professed so high an esteem, and even affection: but when, on my return to company, my grandmamma related what passed between them,

* See Letters iii. iv. v.

and the letters were read; then again were my failing spirits unable to support me. They all gazed upon me, as the letters were reading, as well as while my grandmamma was giving the relation of what he said; and of the noble, the manly air with which he delivered himself.—With joy and silent congratulation they gazed upon me; while I felt such a variety of sensibilities in my heart, as I never felt before; sensibilities mixed with wonder; and I was sometimes ready to doubt whether I were not in a reverie; whether indeed I was in this world, or another; whether I was Harriet Byron—I know not how to describe what I felt in my now fluttering, now rejoicing, now dejected heart—

Dejected?—Yes, my dear Lady G. Dejection was a strong ingredient in my sensibilities. I know not why. Yet may there not be a fulness in joy, that will mingle dissatisfaction with it? If there may, shall I be excused for my solemnity, if I deduce from thence an argument, that the human soul is not to be fully satisfied by worldly enjoyments; and that therefore the completion of its happiness must be in another, a more perfect state? You, Lady G. are a very good woman, though a lively one; and I will not excuse *you*, if on an occasion that bids me look forward to a very solemn event, you will not forgive my *seriousness*.—That *bids me look forward*, I repeat; for Sir Charles Grandison cannot alter his mind: the world has not wherewith to *tempt* him to alter it, after he has made *such* advances; except I misbehave.

Well, my dear, and what was the result of our conference?—My grandmamma, my aunt, and Lucy, were of opinion, that I ought no more to revolve the notions of a divided or second-placed love: that every point of female delicacy was answered: that he ought not only *still* to be allowed to love Lady

Clementina, but that I and all her sex should revere her: that my grandmamma, being the person applied to, should answer for me, for us all, in words of her own choosing.

I was silent. What think *you*, my dear? said my aunt.

Think! said my uncle, with his usual facetiousness; Do you think, if Harriet had *one* objection, she would have been silent?—I am for sending up for Sir Charles directly. Let him come the first day of next week, and let them be married before the end of it.

Not *quite* so hasty, neither, Mr. Selby, said my grandmamma, smiling: let us send to Mr. Deane. His love for my child, and regard for us all, deserve the most grateful returns.

What a deuce, and defer an answer to Sir Charles, who gives a generous reason, for the sake of the lady abroad, and her family (and I hope he thinks a little of his *own* sake) for wishing a speedy answer?—

No, Mr. Selby: not defer writing, neither. We know enough of Mr. Deane's mind already. But, for my part, I don't know what terms, what conditions, what additions to my child's fortune, to propose—

Additions! madam—Why, oy; there must be some to be sure—And we are able, and as willing as able, let me tell you, to make them—

I beseech you, Sir, said I—Pray, madam—No more of this—Surely it is time enough to talk of these subjects.

So it is, niece. Mr. Deane is a lawyer. God help me! I never was brought up to any-thing but to live on the fat of the land, as the saying is. Mr. Deane and Sir Charles shall talk this matter over by themselves. Let us, as you say, send for Mr. Deane.—

But I will myself be the messenger of these joyful tidings.

My uncle then tuned out, in his gay manner, a line of an old song; and then said, I'll go to Mr. Deane: I will set out this very day—Pull down the wall, as one of our kings said; the door is too far about.—I'll bring Mr. Deane with me to-morrow, or it shall cost me a fall.

You know my uncle, my dear. In this manner did he express his joy.

My grandmother retired to her closet; and this that follows is what she wrote to Sir Charles. Every-body is pleased whenever she takes up the pen. No one made objection to a single word in it.

DEAR SIR,

Reserve would be unpardonable on our side, though the woman's, to a man who is above reserve, and whose offers are the result of deliberation, and an affection, that, being founded in the merit of our dearest child, cannot be doubted. We all receive as an honour the offer you make us of an alliance which would do credit to families of the first rank. It will perhaps be one day owned to you, that it was the height of Mrs. Selby's wishes and mine, that the man who had rescued the dear creature from insult and distress, might be at liberty to intitle himself to her grateful love.

The noble manner in which you have explained yourself on a subject which has greatly embarrassed you, has abundantly satisfied Mrs. Selby, and myself: we can have no scruples of delicacy. Nor am I afraid of suffering from yours by my frankness. But, as to our Harriet—You may perhaps meet with some (not affectation; she is above it) difficulty with *her*, if you expect her *whole* heart to be yours. She, Sir, experimentally knows how to allow for

a double, a divided love—Dr. Bartlett, perhaps, should not have favoured her with the character of a lady whom she prefers to herself; and Mrs. Selby and I have sometimes, as we read her melancholy story, thought, not unjustly. If she can be induced to love, to honour, the man of her choice as much as she loves, honours, and admires, Lady Clementina; the happy man will have reason to be satisfied. You see, Sir, that we, who were able to give a preference to the same lady against ourselves [Harriet Byron *is* ourself] can have no scruples on *your* giving it to the same incomparable woman. May that lady be happy! If she were *not* to be so, and her unhappiness were to be owing to our happiness; that, dear Sir, would be all that could pain the hearts of any of us, on an occasion so very agreeable to

Your sincere friend and servant,

HENRIETTA SHIRLEY.

But, my dear Lady G. does your brother tell you and Lady L. nothing of his intentions? Why, if he does, do not you—But I *can* have no doubt. Is not the man Sir Charles Grandison? And yet, methinks, I want to know what the contents of his next letters from Italy will be.

You will have no scruple, my dear Lady G. to shew my whole letter to Lady L. and, if you please, to my Emily—But only mention the contents, in your own way, to the gentlemen. I beg you will yourself shew it to Mrs. Reeves: she will rejoice in her *prognostications*. Use that word to her: she will understand you. Your brother must now, less than ever, see what I write. I depend upon your discretion, my dear Lady G.

HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER IX.

LADY G. TO MISS BYRON.

Saturday, September 23.

EXCELLENT Mrs. Shirley! Incomparable woman! How I love her! If I were such an excellent ancient, I would no more wish to be young, than she has so often told us, she does. What my brother once said, and you once wrote to your Lucy, is true (in *her* case, at least); that the matronly and advanced time of life, in a woman, is far from being the *least* eligible part of it; especially, I may add, when health and a good conscience accompany it. What a spirit does she, at her time of life, write with!—But her heart is in her subject—I hope I may say *that*, Harriet, without offending you.

Not a word did my brother speak of his intention, till he received that letter; and then he invited Lady L. and me, and our two honest men, to afternoon tea with him—[O but I have not reckoned with you for your saucy rebukes in your last of the 7th; I owe you a spite for it; and, Harriet, depend on payment—What was I writing?—I have it—] And when tea was over, he, without a blush, without looking down, as a girl would do in this situation—[But why so, Harriet? Is a woman, on these occasions, to act a part as if she supposed herself to be the greatest gainer by matrimony; and therefore was ashamed of consenting to accept of an honourable offer? As if, in other words, she was to be the self-denying receiver rather than conferrer of an obligation?—Lord, how we rambling-headed creatures break in upon ourselves!] with a good grace he told us of his intention to marry; of his apparition to

Mrs. Shirley; of his sudden vanishing; and all that —And then he produced Mrs. Shirley's letter, but just received.

And do you think we were not overjoyed?—Indeed we were. We congratulated him: we congratulated each other: Lord L. looked as he did when Caroline gave him his happy day: Lord G. could not keep his seat: he was tipsy, poor man, with his joy: aunt Nell pranked herself, stroked her ribbands of pink and yellow, and chuckled and mumped for joy, that her nephew at last would not go out of Old England for a wife. She was *mightily* pleased too with Mrs. Shirley's letter. It was just such a one as she herself would have written upon the occasion.

I posted afterwards to Mrs. Reeves, to shew her, as you requested, your letter: and when we had read it, there was, Dear Madam, and, Dear Sir! and now this, and now that, and thank God—three times in a breath; and we were cousins, and cousins, and cousins: and, O blessed! and, O be joyful: —and, Hail the day!—And, God grant it to be a short one!—And, How will Harriet answer the question? Will not her frankness be tried? He despises affectation: so he thinks does she!—Good Sirs! and, O dears!—How things are brought about!—O my Harriet, you never heard or saw such congratulations between three gossips, as were between our two cousin Reeves's and me: and not a little did the good woman pride herself in her *prognostics*; for she explained that matter to me.

Dr. Bartlett is at Grandison-hall, with our unhappy cousin. How will the good man rejoice!

Now you will ask, what became of Emily?—

By the way, do you know that Mrs. O'Hara is turned *Methodist*? True as you are alive. And she labours hard to convert her husband. Thank God

she is any-thing that is serious! Those people have really great merit with me, in *her* conversion.—I am sorry that our own clergy are not as zealously in earnest as they. They have really, my dear, if we may believe aunt Eleanor, given a face of religion to subterranean colliers, tinners, and the most profligate of men, who hardly ever before heard either of the word, or thing. But *I* am not turning *Methodist*, Harriet. No, you will not suspect me.

Now Emily, who is at present my visiter, had asked leave before my brother's invitation (and was gone, my Jenny attending her) to visit her mother, who is not well. My brother was engaged to sup abroad, with some of the Danbys, I believe: I therefore made Lord and Lady L. cousin Reeves and cousin Reeves, and my aunt Grandison, sup with me.

Emily was at home before me—Ah the poor Emily!—I'll tell you how it was between us—

My lovely girl, my dear Emily, said I, I have good news to tell you, about Miss Byron—

O thank God!—And is she well? Pray, madam, tell me, tell me; I long to hear good news of my dear Miss Byron.

Why, she will shortly be married, Emily!—

Married, madam!—

Yes, my love!—And to your guardian, child!—

To my guardian, madam!—Well, but I hope so—

I then gave her a few particulars.

The dear girl tried to be joyful, and burst into tears!

Why weeps my girl?—O fie! Are you sorry that Miss Byron will have your guardian? I thought you loved Miss Byron.

So I do, madam, as my own self, and more than myself, if possible—But the surprise, madam—In-

deed I am glad! What makes me such a fool? Indeed I am glad!—What ails me to cry, I wonder! It is what I wished, what I prayed for, night and day. Dear madam, don't tell any-body. I am ashamed of myself.

The sweet April-faced girl then smiled through her tears.

I was charmed with her innocent sensibility; and if you are not, I shall think less of you than ever I did yet.

Dear madam, said she, permit me to withdraw for a few minutes: I must have my cry out—And I shall then be all joy and gladness.

She tript away; and in half an hour came down to me with quite another face.

Lady L. was then with me. I had told her of the girl's emotion. We are equally lovers of you, my dear, said I; you need not be afraid of Lady L.

And have you told, madam?—Well, but I am not a hypocrite. What a strange thing! I who have always been so much afraid of another lady, for Miss Byron's sake, to be so oddly affected, as if I were sorry!—Indeed I rejoice.—But if you tell Miss Byron, she won't love me: she won't let me live with her and my guardian, when she is happy, and has made him so. And what shall I do then? for I have set my heart upon it.

Miss Byron, my dear, loves you so well, that she will not be able to deny you any-thing your heart is set upon, that is in her power to grant.

God bless Miss Byron as I love her, and she will be the happiest of women!—But what was the matter with me?—Yet I believe I know—My poor mother had been crying sadly to me, for her past unhappy life. She kissed me, as she said, for my *father*'s sake: she had been the worst of wives to the best of husbands.

Again the good girl wept at her mother's remembered remorse—My guar—my guardian's goodness, my mother said, had awakened her to a sense of her wickedness. My poor mother did not spare herself: and I was all sorrow; for what could I say to her on such a subject?—And all the way that I came home in the coach, I did nothing but cry. I had but just dried my eyes, and tried to look cheerful, when you came in. And then, when you told me the good news, something struck me all at once, struck my very heart; I cannot account for it: I know not what to liken it to—And had I not burst into tears, I believe it would have been worse for me. But now I am myself; and if my poor mother could pacify her conscience, I should be a happy creature—*because* of Miss Byron's happiness. You look at each other, ladies: but if you think I should *not*, bid me begone from your presence for a false girl, and never see you more.

Now, Harriet, this emotion of Emily appears to me as a sort of phenomenon. Do *you* account for it as you will; but I am sure Emily is no hypocrite: she has no art: she *believes* what she says, that her sudden burst of tears was owing to her heart being affected by her mother's contrition: and I am also sure that she loves you above all the women in the world. Yet it is possible that the subtle thief, ycleped love, had got very near her heart; and just at the moment threw a dart into one angle of it, which was the *something* that struck her, all at once, as she phrased it, and made her find tears a relief. This I know, my dear, that we may be very differently affected by the same event, when judged of at a distance, and near. If you don't already, or if you soon will not, experience the truth of this observation in the great event before you, I am much mistaken.

But you see, Harriet, what joy this happy declaration of my brother, and the kind reception it has met with from Northamptonshire, has given us all. We will keep your secret, never fear, till all is over; and, when it is, you shall let my brother know, from the letters we have had the favour of seeing, as much as *we* do. Till he does, excellent as he thinks you, he will not know one half of your excellencies, nor the merit which your love and your suspenses have made you with him.

But, with you, I long for the arrival of the next letters from Italy. God grant that Lady Clementina hold her resolution, now that she sees it is almost impossible for her to avoid marrying! If she should relent, what would be the consequence, to my brother, to herself, to you! And how shall all we, his friends and yours, be affected! You think the lady is obliged, in duty to her parents, to marry. Lady L. and I are determined to be wise, and not give our opinions till the events which are yet in the bosom of fate, disclosing themselves, shall not leave us a possibility of being much mistaken. And yet, as to what the filial duty requires of her, we think she ought to marry. Mean time, I repeat, God grant, that Lady Clementina now hold her mind!'

* *

Lady L. sends up her name. Formality in *her*, surely. I will chide her. But here she comes—I love, Harriet, to write to the moment; that's a knack I had from you and my brother: and be sure continue it, on every occasion: no *pathetic* without it.

Your servant, Lady L.

And *your* servant, Lady G.—Writing? To whom?

To our Harriet—

I will read your letter—Shall I?

Take it: but read it out, that I may know what I have written.

Now give it me again. I'll write down what you say to it, Lady L.

Lady L. I say you are a whimsical creature. But I don't like what you have *last* written.

Charlotte. Last written—'Tis down.—But why so, Lady L.?

Lady L. How can you thus teaze our beloved Byron, with your conjectural evils?

Ch. Have I supposed an impossibility?—But 'tis down—*Conjectural evils.*

Lady L. If you are so whimsical, write—'My dear Miss Byron.'—

Ch. My dear Miss Byron—'Tis down.

Lady L. [Looking over me] 'Do not let what this strange Charlotte has written, grieve you:'—

Ch. Very well, Caroline!—*grieve you.*—

Lady L. 'Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof.'

Ch. Well observed.—Words of Scripture, I believe—Well—*evil thereof.*—

Lady L. Never, surely, was there such a creature as you, Charlotte—

Ch. That's down, too.—

Lady L. Is that down? laughing—That should not have been down—Yet 'tis true.

Ch. Yet 'tis true—What's next?

Lady L. Pish—

Ch. Pish.—

Lady L. Well, now to Harriet—'Clementina can not alter her resolution; her objection still subsisting. Her love for my brother'—

Ch. Hold, Lady L. Too much, at one time—*Her love for my brother*—

Lady L. 'On which her apprehensions that she shall not be able, if she be his wife'—

Ch. Not so much at once, I tell you: it is *too*

much for my giddy head to remember—*if she be his wife*—

Lady L. —'to adhere to her own religion, are founded'—

Ch. —*founded.*

Lady L. 'Is a security for her adherence to a resolution so glorious to herself.'

Ch. Well said, Lady L.—May it be so, say, and pray, I.—Any more, Lady L.?

Lady L. 'Therefore'—

Ch. Therefore—

Lady .L 'Regard not the perplexing Charlotte'—

Ch. I thank you, Caroline—*perplexing Charlotte*—

Lady L. 'Is the advice of your ever-affectionate sister, friend, and servant,'—

Ch. So!—*friend and servant*—

Lady L. Give me the pen—

Ch. Take another. She did—and subscribed her name, '*C. L.*'

With all my heart, Harriet. And here, after I have repeated my hearty wishes, that nothing of this that I have so sagely apprehended may happen (for I desire not to be dubbed a witch so much at my own, as well as at your, expence), I will also subscribe that of

Your no less affectionate sister, friend, and servant,

CHARLOTTE G.

My brother says, he has sent you a letter, and your grandmamma another—Full of grateful sensibilities, both, I make no question.—But no flight, or goddess-making absurdity, I dare say. You will give us copies, *if you are as obliging* as *you used to be.*

LETTER X.

MISS BYRON TO LADY G.

Monday, September 25.

WHAT have I done to my Charlotte? Is there not something cold and particular in your stile, especially in that part of your letter preceding the entrance of my good Lady L.? And in your postscript—*You will give us copies, if you are as obliging as you used to be.*—Why should I, when likely to be more obliged to you than ever, be less obliging than before? I can't bear this from Lady G. Are you giving me a proof of the truth of your own observation? 'That we may be very differently affected by the same event, when judged of at distance, and near.'—I could not support my spirits, if the sister of Sir Charles Grandison loved me the less for the distinction her brother pays me.

And what, my dear, if Lady Clementina *should* RELENT, as you phrase it?—My *friends* might be now grieved—Well, and I might be affected too, more than if the visit to my grandmamma had not been made. I own it.—But the high veneration I truly profess to have for Lady Clementina, would be parade and pretension, if, whatever became of your Harriet, I did not resolve, in that case, to *try*, at least, to make myself easy, and give up to her prior and worthier claim: and I should consider her *effort*, though unsuccessful, as having intitled her to my highest esteem. To what we know to be right, we ought to submit; the more difficult, the more meritorious: and, in this case, your Harriet would conquer, or die. If she conquered, she would then, in *that* instance, be greater than even Clementina. O my dear, we know not, till we have the trial,

what emulation will enable a warm and honest mind to do.

I will send you inclosed, the two letters transcribed by Lucy*. I am very proud of them both; perhaps too proud; and it may be necessary that I should be pulled down; though I expected it not from my Charlotte. 'To be complimented in so noble and sincere a manner as you will see I am, with the power of laying an obligation on him' (instead of owing it to his compassionate consideration for a creature so long labouring in suspense, and then despairing that her hopes could be answered) is enough at the same time to flatter her vanity, and gratify the most delicate sensibility.

You will see 'how gratefully he takes my grandmamma's hint, that I knew how by experience to account for a double, a *divided* love, as she is pleased to call it—and the preference my aunt, and herself, and I, have given to the claim of Lady Clementina.' You, my dear, know our sincerity in this particular. There is some merit in owning a truth when it makes against us. To do justice in another's case against one's self, is, methinks, making at least a *second* merit for one's self. 'He asks my leave to attend me at Selby-house.'—I should rejoice to see him—But I could wish, methinks, that he had first received letters from abroad. But how can I hint my wishes to him without implying either doubt or reserve?—*Reserve* in the delay of his visit implied by such hint; *doubt*, of his being at liberty to pursue his intentions: that would not become me to shew; as it might make him think that I wanted protestations and assurances from him, in order to *bind* him to me; when, if the situation be such as

* These letters do not appear. The contents may be gathered from what she here says of them.

obliges him to balance but in *thought,* and I could know it, I would die before I would accept of his hand. He has confirmed and established, as I may say, my pride (I had always some) by the distinction he has given me: yet I should despise myself, if I found it gave me either arrogance, or affectation. 'He is so considerate as to dispense with my answering his letters;' for he is pleased to say, 'That if I do not *forbid* him to come down, by my aunt Selby, or my grandmamma, he will presume upon my leave.'

My uncle set out for Peterborough, in order to bring Mr. Deane with him to Selby-house. Poor Mr. Deane kept his chamber for a week before; yet had not let us know he was ill. He was forbid to go abroad for two days more; but was so overjoyed at what my uncle communicated to him, that he said, he was not sensible of ailing any thing; and he would have come with my uncle next day, but neither he nor the doctor would permit it: but on Saturday he came—Such joy! Dear good man! Such congratulations!—How considerable to their happiness, do they all make that of their Harriet!

They have been in consultation often; but they have excluded me from some particular ones. I guess the subject; and beg of them, that I may not be *too much* obliged. What critical situations have I been in! When will they be at an end?

Mr. Deane has written to Sir Charles. I am not to know the contents of his letter.

The hearts of us women, when we are urged to give way to a *clandestine* and *unequal* address, or when inclined to favour such a one, are apt, when pleaded with, to rise against the notions of bargain and sale. *Smithfield bargains,* you Londoners call them: but unjust is the intended odium, if preliminaries are necessary in all treaties of this nature.

And surely previous stipulations are indispensably so among us changeable mortals, however promising the sun-shine may be at our setting out on the journey of life: a journey too that will not be ended but with the life of one of the travellers.

If I ever were to be tempted to wish for great wealth, it would be for the sake of Sir Charles Grandison; that I might be a means of enlarging his power: since I am convinced, that the necessities of every worthy person within the large circle of his acquaintance would be relieved, according to his ability.

My dear Emily!—Ah Lady G.! Was it *possible* for you to think, that my pity for the amiable innocent should not increase my love of her! I will give you leave *indeed* to despise me, if you ever find any-thing in my behaviour to Emily, let me be circumstanced as I will, that shall shew an abatement of that tender affection which ever must warm my heart in her favour. Whenever I can promise any-thing for myself, then shall Emily be a partaker of my felicity, in the way her own heart shall direct. I hope, for *her own* sake, that the dear girl puts the matter right, when she attributes her sudden burst of tears to the weakness of her spirits occasioned by her mother's remorse: but let me say one thing; It would grieve me as much as it did Sir Charles, in the Count of Belvedere's case, to stand in the way of any-body's happiness. It is not, you see, your *brother*'s fault, that he is not the husband of Lady Clementina: she wishes him to marry an English woman. Nor is even the hope of Lady Olivia frustrated by me. You know I always pitied her; and that before I knew, from Sir Charles's letter to Signor Jeronymo, that she thought kindly of me.—Lady Anne S.; Do you think, my dear, that worthy woman could have hopes, were it *not* for me? And could my Emily

have any; were I out of the world?—No, surely: the very *wardship*, which he executes with so much indulgent goodness to her, would exclude all such hopes, considerable enough as his estate is, to answer a larger fortune than even Emily's. Were hers not half so much as it is, it would perhaps be more likely than now, that his generous mind might be disposed in her favour, some years hence.

Let me, however, tell you, that true sisterly pity overwhelmed my heart, when I first read that part of your letter which so pathetically describes her tender woe. Be the occasion her duty, or her love, or owing to a mixture of both, I am charmed with her beautiful simplicity: I wept over that part of your letter for half an hour; and more than once I looked round and round me, wishing for the dear creature to be near me, and wanting to clasp her to my bosom.

Love me still, and that as well as ever, my dear Lady G. or I shall want a great ingredient of happiness, in whatever situation I may be. I have written to thank my dear Lady L. for her goodness to me, in dictating to your pen; and I thank you, my dear, for being dictated to. I cannot be well. Send me but one line; ease my overburdened heart of one of its anxieties, by telling me that there has nothing passed of littleness in me, that has abated your love to

Your ever-grateful, ever-affectionate,

HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER XI.

LADY G. TO MISS BYRON.

Grosvenor-square, Wednesday, September 27.

FLY, *Script*, of one line; on the wings of the wind, fly, to acquaint my Harriet, that I love her above all women—and all *men* too; my brother excepted. Tell her, that I now love her with an increased love; because I love her for *his* sake, as well as for her own.

Forgive, my dear, all the carelesnesses, as you always did the flippancies, of my pen. The happy prospect that all our wishes would be succeeded to us, had given a levity, a wantonness to it. Wicked pen!—But I have burnt the whole parcel from which I took it!—Yet I should correct *myself;* for I don't know whether I did not intend to teaze a little: I don't know whether my compassion for Emily did not make me more silly. If that were so (for really I suffered my pen to take its course at the time; therefore burnt it) I know you will the more readily forgive me.

Littleness, Harriet! You are all that is great and good in woman. The littleness of others adds to your greatness. Have not *my* foibles always proved this?—No, my dear! you are as great as—Clementina herself: and I love you better, if possible, than I love myself.

A few lines more on other subjects; for I can't write a short letter to my Harriet.—

The Countess of D. has made my brother a visit. I happened to be at his house. They were alone together near an hour. At going away, he attending her to her chair, she took my hand; All my hopes are over, said she; but I will love Miss Byron, for

all that. Nor shall *you*, Sir Charles, in the day of your power, deny me my correspondent: nor must you, madam, and Lady L. a friendship with Sir Charles Grandison's two sisters.

Lady W. and my sister and I correspond. I want you to know her, that you may love her as well as we do. Love-matches, my dear, are foolish things. I know not how you will find it some time hence: no general rule, however, without exceptions, you know. Violent love on one side, is enough in conscience, if the other party be not a fool, or ungrateful: the *lover* and *lovée* make generally the happiest couple. Mild, sedate convenience, is better than a stark staring-mad passion. The wall-climbers, the hedge and ditch-leapers, the river-forders, the window-droppers, always find reason to think so. Who ever hears of darts, flames, Cupids, Venus's, Adonis's, and such-like nonsense, in matrimony?—Passion is transitory; but discretion, which never boils over, gives durable happiness. See Lord and Lady W. Lord G. and his good woman, for instances.

O my mad head! And why, think you, did I mention my corresponding with Lady W.?—Only to tell you (and I had like to have forgot it) that she felicitates me in her last, on the likelihood of a happy acquisition to our family, from what my brother communicated of his intention to make his addresses to Somebody—I warrant you guess to whom.

Lady Anne S.—Poor Lady Anne S.!—I dare not tell my brother how much she loves him: I am sure it would make him uneasy.

Beauchamp desires his compliments to you. He is in great affliction. Poor Sir Harry is thought irrecoverable. Different physicians have gone their rounds with him: but the new ones only ask what the old ones did, that they may *guess* at something else to make trial of. When a patient has money,

it is difficult, I believe, for a physician to be honest, and to say, till the last extremity, That the parson and sexton may take him.

'Adieu, my love!—Adieu, all my grandmammas, aunts, cousins, and kin's kin of Northamptonshire—Adieu!

CHARLOTTE G.

LETTER XII.

MISS BYRON TO LADY G.

Tuesday, October 3.

A THOUSAND thanks to you, my dear Lady G. for the favour of your last: you have re-assured me in it. I think I could not have been happy even in the affection of Sir Charles Grandison, were I to have found an abatement in the love of his two sisters. Who, that knows you both, and that had been favoured with your friendship, could have been satisfied with the least diminution of it?

I have a letter from the Countess of D.* She is a most generous woman. 'She even congratulates me, on your brother's account, from the conversation that passed between him and her. She gives me the particulars of it. Exceedingly flattering are they to my vanity.' I *must*, my dear, be happy, if you continue to love me; and if I can know that Lady Clementina is not unhappy. This latter is a piece of intelligence, necessary for my tranquillity: for can your brother be happy, if *that* lady be otherwise, whose grievous malady could

* This letter does not appear.

hold in suspense his generous heart, when he had no prospects at the time of ever calling her his?

I pity from my heart Lady Anne S. What a dreadful thing is hopeless love; the object so worthy, that every mouth is full of his praises! How many women will your brother's preference of *one*, be she who she will, disappoint in their first loves! Yet out of a hundred women, how few are there, who, for one reason or other, have the man of their choice!

I remember, you once said, It was well that love is not a passion absolutely invincible: but however, I do not, my dear, agree with you in your notions of all love-matches. Love merely *personal*, that sort of love which commences between the years of fifteen and twenty; and when the extraordinary *merit* of the object is not the foundation of it; may, I believe, and perhaps generally *ought* to, be subdued. But love that is founded on a merit that every-body acknowledges—I don't know what to say to the vincibility of *such* a love. For myself, I think it impossible that I ever could have been the wife of any man on earth but one, and given him my affection in so *intire* a manner, as should, on reflection, have acquitted my own heart; though I hope I should not have been wanting in my general duties —Because I must have been conscious, that there was another man whom I would have preferred to him. Let me add, that when prospects were darkest with regard to my wishes, I promised my grandmamma and aunt to make myself easy, at least to endeavour to do so, if they never would propose to me the Earl of D. or any other man. They *did* promise me.

Lady D. in her letter to me, 'is so good as to claim the continuance of my correspondence.' Most ungrateful, and equally self-denying, must I be, if I were to decline my part of it.

I have a letter from Sir Rowland Meredith *. You, who have seen his former letters to me, need not be shewn this. The same honest heart appears in them all; the same kind professions of paternal love.

You love Sir Rowland; and will be pleased to hear that his worthy nephew is likely to recover his health. I cannot, however, be joyful that they are resolved to make me soon one more visit. But you will see that Mr. Fowler thinks, if he could be allowed to visit me once more, he should, though hoping nothing from the visit, be easier for the rest of his life. A strange way of thinking! supposing love to be his distemper: is it not?

I have a letter from Mr. Fenwick. He has made a very short excursion abroad. He tells me in it, that he designs me a visit on a particular subject. If it be, as I suspect, to engage my interest with my Lucy, he shall *not* have her: he is not worthy of her.

The friendship and favour of Lady W. is one of the great felicities which seem to offer to bless my future lot.

Mr. Greville is the most persevering, as well as most audacious of men. As other men endeavour to gain a woman's affections by politeness; he makes pride, ill-nature, and impetuosity, the proofs of his love; and thinks himself ill used, especially since his large acquisition of fortune, that they are not accepted as such. He has obliged Mr. Deane to hear his pleas; and presumed to hope for his favour. Mr. Deane frankly told him, that his interest lay quite another way. He then insolently threatened with destruction, the man, be he who he will, that shall stand in his way. He doubts not, he says, but Sir Charles Grandison is the man designed: but if

* This letter appears not.

so *cool* a lover is to be encouraged against so *fervent* a one as himself, he is mistaken in all his notions of Women's conduct and judgments in love-matters. A *discreet* lover, he says, is an unnatural character: women, the odious wretch says, love to be devoured [Is he not an odious wretch?]; and if Miss Byron can content herself with another woman's *leavings*, for that, he says, he is well informed is the case, he knows what he shall think of her spirit. And then he threw out, as usual, reflections on our sex, which had malice in them.

This man's threats disturb me. God grant that your brother may not meet with any more embarrassments from insolent men, on my account!

If these men, this Greville in particular, would let me be at peace, I should be better, I believe, in my health: but Lady Frampton is his advocate, by letter. He watches my footsteps, and in every visit I make, throws himself in the way: and on Sundays he is always ready with his officious hand, as I alight to enter the church; and to lead me back to my uncle's coach. My uncle cannot affront him, because he will not be affronted by him. He raillies off, with an intrepidity that never was exceeded, all that my aunt says to him. I repulse him with anger every-where but in a place so public and so sacred. He disturbs my devotion, with his bold eyes always fixed on our pew; which draw every one's after them. He has the assurance, when he intrudes himself into my company, to laugh off my anger; telling me, that it is what he has long wished for; and that now he is so much used to it, that he can live on my frowns, and cannot support life without them. He plainly tells me, that Mr. Fenwick's arrival from abroad, and another certain person's also, are the occasion of his resumed sedulity.

Every-body about us, in short, is interested for

or against him. He makes me appear coy and ridiculous. He—But no more of this bold man. Would to Heaven that some one of those who like such, would relieve me from him.

Visiters, and the post, oblige me, sooner than I otherwise should, to conclude myself, my dear Lady G.

Ever yours,

HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER XIII.

MR. DEANE TO SIR CHARLES GRANDISON.

Selby-house, Tuesday, October 3.

An alliance more acceptable, were it with a prince, could not be proposed, than that which Sir Charles Grandison, in a manner so worthy of himself, has proposed with a family who have thought themselves under obligation to him, ever since he delivered the darling of it from the lawless attempts of a savage libertine. I know to whom I write; and will own, that it has been *my* wish, in a most particular manner.

As to the surviving part of the family, *exclusive* of Miss Byron (for I will mention her parents by and by) it is, in all its branches, worthy: indeed, Sir, your wish of a relation to *them*, is not a discredit to your high character. As to the young lady—I say nothing of her—Yet how shall I forbear—O Sir, believe me! she will dignify your choice. Her duty and her inclination through every relation of life, were never divided.

Excuse me, Sir—No parent was ever more fond of his child than I have been, from her infancy, of

this my daughter by adoption. Hence, Sir, being consulted on this occasion, as my affection I will say for the whole family deserves, I take upon me to acquaint you, before any further steps are taken, what our dear child's fortune will be: for it has been always my notion, that a young gentleman, in such a case, should, the moment he offers himself, if his own proposals are acceptable, be spared the *indelicacy* of asking questions as to fortune. We know, Sir, yours is great: but as your spirit is princely, you ought to have something worthy of your own fortune with a wife. But here, alas! we must fail, I doubt; at least, in hand.

Mr. Byron was one of the best of men: his lady a most excellent woman: there never was a happier pair. Both had reason to boast of their ancestry. His estate was upwards of four thousand pounds a year; but it was entailed, and, in failure of male heirs, was to descend to a second branch of the family, which had made itself the more unworthy of it, by settling in a foreign country, renouncing, as I may say, its own. Mr. Byron died a young man, and left his lady *ensient;* but grief for losing him, occasioned first her miscarriage, and then her death; and the estate followed the name. Hence, be pleased to know, that Miss Byron's fortune, in her own right, is no more than between thirteen and fourteen thousand pounds. It is chiefly in the funds. It has been called 15,000l. but is not much more than thirteen. Her grandmother's jointure is between 4 and 500l. a year. We none of us wish to see my god-daughter in possession of it: she herself least of all. Mrs. Shirley is called, by every one that knows her, or speaks of her, The ornament of old age. Her husband, an excellent man, desired her to live always in the mansion-house, and in the hospitable way he had ever kept up, if what he left her

would support her in it. She has been longer spared to the prayers of her friends, and to those of the poor, than was apprehended; for she is infirm in health. She therefore can do but little towards the increase of her child's fortune. But Shirley-manor is a fine old seat, Sir!—And there is timber upon the estate, which wants but ten years growth, and will be felled to good account. Mr. Selby is well in the world. He proposes, as a token of his love, to add 3000l. in hand to his niece's fortune, and by his will, something very considerable, further expectant on his lady's death; who being Miss Byron's aunt, by the father's side, intends by her will to do very handsomely for her.—By the way, my dear Sir, be assured, that what I write is absolutely unknown to Miss Byron.

There *is* a man who loves her as he loves himself. This man has laid by a sum of money every year for the advancing her in marriage, beginning with the fifth year of her life, when it was seen what a hopeful child she was: this has been put at accumulated interest; and it amounts, in sixteen years, or thereabouts, to very near 8000l. This man, Sir, will make up the eight thousand ten, to be paid on the day of marriage: and I hope, without promising for what this man will do further at his death, that you will accept of this five or six-and-twenty thousand pounds, as the cheerfullest given and best-bestowed money that ever was laid out.

Let not these particulars pain you, Sir: they should not: the subject is a necessary one. You, who ought to give way to the increase of that power which you so nobly use, must not be pained at this mention, once for all. Princes, Sir, are not above asking money of their people as free-gifts, on the marriage of their children. He that would be greater than a prince, may, before he is aware, be less

than a gentleman. Of this ten thousand pounds, eight is Miss Byron's due, as she is likely to be so happy with all our consents: else it would not: for that was the man's *reserved* condition; and the sum, or the designation of it, was till this day only known to himself.

As to settlements in return, I would have acted the lawyer, but the *honest* lawyer, with you, Sir, and made demands of you; but Mr. and Mrs. Selby, and Mrs. Shirley, unanimously declare, that you shall not be prescribed to in this case. Were you not Sir Charles Grandison? was the question. I was against leaving it to you, for that *very* reason. It will be, said I, to provoke such a man as Sir Charles to do too much. Most other men ought to be spurred; but *this* must be held in. But, however, I acquiesced; and the more easily, because I expect that the deeds shall pass through my hands; and I will take care that you shall not, in order to give a proof of love where it is not wanted, exert an inadequate generosity.

These matters I thought it was absolutely necessary to apprise you of: you will have the goodness to excuse any imperfections in my manner of writing. There are none in my heart, when I assure you, that no man breathing can more respect you, than, Sir,

Your most faithful and obedient humble servant,

THOMAS DEANE.

LETTER XIV.

SIR CHARLES GRANDISON TO THOMAS DEANE, ESQ.

Thursday, October 5.

You know not, my dear Mr. Deane, upon what an unthankful man you would bestow your favours. I pretend not to be above complying with the laudable customs of the world. Princes are examples to themselves. I have always, in things indifferent, been willing to take the world as I find it; and conform to it.

To say Miss Byron is a treasure in herself, is what every man would say, who has the honour to know her: yet I would not, in a vain ostentation, as the interest of a man and his wife is one, make a compliment to my affection by resigning or giving from her her natural right; especially as there is no one of her family that wants to be benefited by such gifts or resignations. But then I will not allow, that any of her friends shall part with what is theirs, to supply—What? A *supposed* deficiency in her fortune. And by *whom*, as implied by you, supposed a deficiency—By me; and it is left to me to *confirm* the imputation by my acceptance of the addition so generously, as to the *intention*, offered. Had I incumbrances on my estate, which, undischarged, would involve in difficulties the woman I love; I know not what, for *her* sake, I might be tempted to do. But avarice only can induce a man, who wants it not, to accept of the bounty of a lady's friends, in their life-time especially—When those friends are not either father or mother; one of them not a relation by blood, though he is by a nearer tie, that of love: and is not the fortune which the lady possesses in her own right, an ample one?

I am as rich as I wish to be, my dear Mr. Deane. Were my income *less*, I would live within it; were it *more*, it would increase my duties. Permit me, my good Sir, to ask, has the MAN, as you call him (and a MAN indeed he appears to me to be) who intends to make so noble a present to a stranger, no relations, no friends, who would have reason to think themselves unkindly treated, if he gave from them such a large portion of his fortune?

I would not be thought romantic; neither aim I at ostentation. I would be as glad to *follow*, as to *set*, a good example. Can I have a nobler, if Miss Byron honours me with her hand, than she, in *that* case, will give in preferring me to the Earl of D. a worthy man, with a much more splendid fortune than mine? Believe me, my dear Mr. Deane, it would, on an event so happy, be a restraint to my own joy before friends so kindly contributing to the increase of her fortune, lest they should imagine that their generosity, on the occasion, was one of the motives of my gratitude to her for her goodness to me.

You tell me, that Miss Byron knows nothing of your proposals: I beseech you let her not know anything of them: abase not so much, in her eyes, the man who presumes on her favour for the happiness of the rest of his life, by supposing (*your* supposition, Sir, may have weight with *her*) he could value her the more for such an addition to her fortune. No, Sir: let Miss Byron (satisfied with the consciousness of a worth which all the world acknowledges) in one of the most solemn events of her life, look round among her congratulating friends with that modest confidence which the sense of laying a high obligation on a favoured object gives to diffident merit; and which the receiving of favours from all her friends, as if to supply a supposed defective worth, must either abate; or, if it do not, make her think

less of the interested man, who could submit to owe such obligations.

If these friendly expostulations conclude against the offer of your *generous friend*, they equally do so against that of Mr. Selby. Were that gentleman and his lady the *parents* of Miss Byron, the case would be different: but Miss Byron's fortune is an *ascertained* one; and Mr. Selby has relations who stand in an equal degree of consanguinity to him, and who are all intitled, by their worthiness, to his favour. My best respects and thanks are however due; and I beg you will make my acknowledgments accordingly, as well to your *worthy friend*, as to Mr. Selby.

I take the liberty to send you down the rent-roll of my English estate. Determine for *me* as you please, my dearest Mr. Deane: only take this caution—Affront me not a second time; but let the settlements be such, as may be fully answerable to my fortune; although, in the common methods of calculation, it may exceed that of the dear lady. That you may be the better judge of this, you will find a brief particular of my Irish estate subjoined to the other.

I was intending, when I received yours, to do myself the honour of a visit to Selby-house. I am impatient to throw myself at the feet of my dear Miss Byron, and to commend myself to the favour of Mr. and Mrs. Selby, and every one of a family I am prepared by their characters, as well as by their relation to Miss Byron, to revere and love: but as you seem to choose that the requisite preliminaries should be first adjusted by pen and ink, I submit, though with reluctance, to that course; but with the less, as I may, in the interim, receive letters from abroad, which, though they can now make no alteration with regard to the treaty so happily begun,

may give me an opportunity of laying the whole state of my affairs before Miss Byron; by which means she will be enabled to form a judgment of them, and of the heart of, dear Sir,

Her and your most affectionate,
obliged and faithful humble servant,
CH. GRANDISON.

LETTER XV.

MISS BYRON TO LADY G.

[*With the two preceding letters.*]

Selby-house, Saturday, October 7.

WELL did you observe, my dear, that we may be very differently affected by the same event, when judged of at a distance, and near. *May* I, in the present situation, presume to say *near?* Mr. Deane has entered into the particulars of my fortune with Sir Charles. The letter was not shewn me before it went; and I was not permitted to see the copy of it till your brother's answer came; and then they shewed me both.

O my dear Mr. Deane! my ever-kind uncle and aunt Selby! was not your Harriet Byron too much obliged to you before?—As to your brother, What, my love, shall I do with my *pride?* I did not know I had so much of that bad quality. My poverty, my dear, has added to my pride. Were my fortune superior to that of your brother, I am sure I should not be so proud as I now, on this occasion, find I am. How generously does he decline accepting the goodness that was offered to give me more consi-

deration with him (as kindly intended by them)! What can I say to him, but that his heart, still prouder than my own, and more generous than that of any other person breathing, will not permit me to owe uncommon obligations to any but himself?

He desires that I may not know any-thing of this transaction: but they thought the communication would give me pleasure. However, they wish me not to take notice to him, when he visits Selby-house, that they have communicated it to me. If I did, I should think myself obliged to manifest a gratitude that would embarrass me in my present situation, and seem to fetter the freedom of my will. Millions of obligations should not bribe me to give up even a corner of my heart, to a man to whom I could not give the whole. Your brother, my dear, is in possession of the whole.

You know that I hate affectation: but must I not have great abatements in my prospects of happiness, because of Lady Clementina? And must they not be still greater, should she be unhappy, should she repent of the resolution she so nobly took, for his saying, that whatever be the contents of his next letters from Italy, they can make no alteration with regard to the treaty begun with us?—Dear, dear Clementina! most excellent of women! Can I bear to stand in the way of your happiness?—I cannot—*My* life, any more than yours, may not be a long one; and I will not sully the whiteness of it (pardon my vanity; I presume to call it so, on retrospecting it, regarding my *intentions* only) by giving way to an act of injustice, though it were to obtain for me the whole heart of the man I love.

Yet think you, my dear, that I am not mortified? 'How can I look round upon my congratulating friends, in one of the most solemn events of my life, with that modest confidence which the sense of

laying an obligation on a favoured object'. (you know in whose generous words I express myself) 'gives to diffident merit?' O my Charlotte! I am *afraid* of your brother! How shall I look up to him, when I next see him?—But I will give way to this new guest, my *pride*. What other way have I?—Will you forgive me, if I try to look upon your brother's generosity to me and my friends, in declining so greatly their offers, as a bribe to make me sit down satisfied with half, nay, *not* half, a heart?—And now will you not say, that I am proud indeed? But his is the most delicate of human minds: and shall not the woman pretend to some delicacy who has looked up to him?

I thought of writing but a few lines in the cover of the two letters. I hope I shall not incur displeasure from any-body here, were they to know I send them to you for your perusal. But let only Lord G. your other self, and Lord and Lady L. read them, and return them by the next post. I know you four will pity the poor and proud girl, who is so inexpressibly obliged almost to every one she knows; but who, believe her, proud as she is, never will be ashamed to own her obligations to you, and Lady L.

Witness,

HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER XVI.

LADY G. TO MISS BYRON.

Grosvenor-square, Tuesday, October 10.

I RETURN your two letters: very good ones, both. I like them. Lord L. and Lord G. thank you for

allowing them to peruse them. We will know nothing of the matter.

My brother will soon be with you, I believe. I wish Dr. Bartlett were in town: one should then know something of the motions of my brother—Not that he is reserved, neither. But he is so much engaged, that I go four times to St. James's Square, and perhaps do not see him once. My lord had the assurance to say, but yesterday, that I was there more than at home. He is very impertinent: I believe he has taken up my sauciness. I laid it down, and thought to resume it occasionally; but when I came to look for it, behold! it was gone!—But I hope, if he has it not, it is only mislaid. I intend, if it come not soon to hand, to set the parish-crier to proclaim the loss, with a reward for the finder. It might be the ruin of some indiscreet woman, should such a one meet with it, and try to use it. Aunt Eleanor [there I remembered myself: no more aunt Nell!] is as joyful, to think her nephew will soon be married, and to an *English* woman, as if she were going to be married herself. Were there to be a wedding in the family, or among her acquaintance, once a year! what with preparation, what with solemnization, good old soul! she would live for ever. Chide again, Harriet; I value it not. Yet in your last chiding you were excessively grave: but I forgive you. Be good, and write me every-thing how and about it; and write to the moment: you cannot be too minute.

I want you to see Lady Olivia's presents: they are princely. I want to see a letter she wrote to my brother: he mentioned it as something extraordinary. When you are his, you must shew me all he writes, that you are permitted to have in your power long enough to transcribe. He and she

correspond. Do you like that, Harriet?—Lady L. writes: Emily writes. So I have only to say, I am

Your humble servant, and so-forth,

CH. G.

LETTER XVII.

MISS BYRON TO LADY G.

Selby-house, Thursday, October 12.

MY DEAR LADY G.

I EXPECT your brother every hour. I hope he comes in pursuance of letters from Italy!—May it be so! and such as will not abate his welcome!

We heard by accident of his approach, by a farmer, tenant to my uncle; who saw a fine gentleman, very handsomely attended, alight, as he left Stratford, at the *very* inn where we baited on our return from London. As a dinner was preparing for him, perhaps, my dear, he will dine in the *very* room we dined in at that time. The farmer had the curiosity to ask who he was; and was answered by the most courteous servants he ever spoke to, that they had the honour to serve Sir Charles Grandison. And the farmer having said he was of Northampton; one of them asked him, how far Selby-house was from that town? The farmer was obliged to hurry home on his own affairs; and meeting my uncle with Mr. Deane, and my cousin James Selby, taking an airing on horseback, told him the visiter he was likely to have. My uncle instantly dispatched his servant to us with the tidings, and that he was gone to meet him, in hopes of conducting him hither.

This news gave me so much emotion, being not well before, that my aunt advised me to retire to my closet, and endeavour to quiet my spirits.

Here then I am, my dear Lady G. and the writing-implements being always at hand in this place, I took up my pen. It is not possible for me to write at this time, but to you, and on this subject. It is good for a busy mind to have something to be employed in; and I think, now I am amusing myself on paper, my heart is a little more governable than it was.

I am glad we heard of his coming before we saw him. But surely Sir Charles Grandison should not have attempted to *surprise* us: should he, my dear? Does it not look like the pride of a man assured of a joyful welcome? I have read of princes, who, acquainted with their ladies by picture only, and having been married by proxy, have set out to their frontiers *incognito*, and in disguise have affected to surprise the poor apprehensive bride.—But here, not only circumstances differ, since there has been no betrothment; but were he of princely rank, I should have expected a more delicate treatment from him.

* *

How will the consciousness of inferiority and obligation set a proud and punctilious mind upon hunting for occasions to justify its caprices!—A servant of Sir Charles is just arrived with a billet directed for my uncle Selby. My aunt opened it. It is dated from Stratford. The contents are, after compliments of enquiry of our healths, to acquaint my uncle, that he shall put up at the George at Northampton, this night; and hopes to be allowed to pay his compliments to us to-morrow morning, at breakfast: so he did not *intend* to give himself the consequence, of which my capricious heart was

so apprehensive. Yet then, as if resolved to find fault, Is not this a little too parading for his natural freedom? thought I: or does he think we should not be able to outlive our joyful surprise, if he gave us not notice of his arrival in these parts before he saw us?—O Clementina!—Goddess! Angel! What a mere mortal, what a woman, dost thou make the poor Harriet Byron appear in her own eyes! How apprehensive of coming after thee! The sense I have of my own littleness, will make me little, indeed!

Well, but I presume, that if my uncle and Mr. Deane meet him, they will prevail on him to come hither this night: yet I suppose he must be allowed to go to the proposed inn afterwards.—But here, he is come!—Come, indeed! My uncle in the chariot with him! My cousin and Mr. Deane, Sally tells me, just alighted. Sally adores Sir Charles Grandison —Begone, Sally. Thy emotions, foolish girl, add to those of thy mistress!—

* *

That I might avoid the appearance of affectation, I was going down to welcome him, when I met my uncle on the stairs. Niece Byron, said he, you have not done *justice* to Sir Charles Grandison. I thought your *love-sick heart* [What words were these, my dear! and at that moment too!] must have been partial to him. He prevailed on me to go into his chariot. You may think yourself very happy. For fifteen miles together did he talk of nobody but you. Let *me* go down with you: let *me* present you to him.

I had before besought my spirits to befriend me, but for one half-hour. Surely there is nothing so unwelcome as an unseasonable jest. *Present me to him! Love-sick heart!* O my uncle! thought I. I was unable to proceed. I hastened back to my closet, as much disconcerted as a child could be,

who, having taken pains to get his lesson by heart, dashed by a chiding countenance, forgot every syllable of it when it came to *say* it. You know, my dear, that I had not of some time been well. My spirits were weak, and joy was almost as painful to me as grief could have been.

My aunt came up—My love, why don't you come down?—What now! Why in tears?—You will appear, to the finest man I ever saw in my life, very particular!—Mr. Deane is in love with him: your cousin James—

Dear madam, I am already, when I make comparisons between him and myself, humbled enough with his excellencies. I did *intend* to avoid particularity; but my uncle has quite disconcerted me—Yet he always means well: I ought not to complain. I attend you, madam.

Can you, Lady G. forgive my pride, my petulance?

My aunt went down before me. Sir Charles hastened to me, the moment I appeared, with an air of respectful love.

He took my hand, and bowing upon it, I rejoice to see my dear Miss Byron; and to see her so well. How many sufferers must there be, when you suffer!

I bid him welcome to England. I hope he heard me: I could not help speaking low: he must observe my discomposure. He led me to a seat, and sat down by me, still holding my hand. I withdrew it not presently, lest he should think me precise: but, as there were so many persons present, I thought it was free in Sir Charles Grandison. Yet perhaps he could not well quit it, as I did not withdraw it; so that the fault might be rather in my passiveness, than in his forwardness.

However, I asked my aunt afterwards, if his looks were not those of a man assured of success; as in-

deed he might be from my grandmother's letter, and my silence to *his.* She said, there was a manly freedom in his address to me; but that it had such a mixture of tenderness in it, that never, in *her* eyes, was freedom so becoming. While he was restrained by his situation, added she, no wonder that he treated you with respect only as a *friend*; but now he finds himself at liberty to address you, his behaviour ought, as a *lover*, to have been just what it was.

Sir Charles led me into talk, by mentioning you and Lady L. your two lords, and my Emily.

My uncle and aunt withdrew, and had some little canvassings, it seems [all their canvassings are those of assured lovers] about the propriety of my uncle's invitation to Sir Charles to take up his residence, while he was in these parts, at Selby-house. My uncle, at coming in, had directed Sir Charles's servants to put up their horses: but they, not having their master's orders to do so, held themselves in readiness to attend him; as they knew that Sir Charles had given directions to his gentleman, Saunders, who brought the billet to my uncle, to go back to Northampton, and provide apartments for him at the George inn there.

My aunt, who you know is a perfect judge of points of decorum, pleaded to my uncle, that it was too well known among our select friends, by Mr. Greville's means, that Sir Charles had never before made his addresses to me; and that therefore, though he was to be treated as a man whose alliance is considered as an honour to us; yet that some measures ought to be kept, as to the *look* of the thing; and that the world might not conclude that I was to be won at his very first appearance; and the rather, as Mr. Greville's violence, as well as virulence, was so well known.

My uncle was petulant. *I*, said he, am always in

the wrong: you women, never. He ran into all those peculiarities of words, for which you have so often raillied him—His *adsheart*, his *female scrupulosities*, his *What a pize*, his hatred of *shilly-shally's* and *fiddle-faddles*, and the rest of our *female nonsenses*, as he calls them. He hoped to salute his niece, as Lady Grandison, in a fortnight: what a *duce* was the matter it could *not* be so, both sides now of a mind?—He warned my aunt, and bid her warn me, against affectation, now the crisis was at hand. Sir Charles, he said, would think meanly of us, if we were *silly*: and then came in another of his odd words: Sir Charles, he said, had been so much already *bamboozled*, that he would not have patience with us; and *therefore*, and for all these *reasons*, as he called them, he desired that Sir Charles might not be suffered to go out of the house, and to an inn; and this as well for the *propriety* of the thing, as for the credit of his own invitation to him.

My aunt replied, that Sir Charles *himself* would expect delicacy from us. It was evident, that he expected not (no doubt for the sake of the world's eye) to reside in the house with *me* on his *first* visit, by his having ordered his servant who brought the billet to take apartments for him at Northampton, even not designing to visit us over-night, had he not been met by Mr. Deane and himself, and *persuaded* to come. In short, my dear, said my aunt, I am as much concerned about Sir Charles's *own* opinion of our conduct, as for that of the world. If Sir Charles is not with us, the oftener he visits us, the more respectful it will be construed. I hope he will live with us all day, and every day: but indeed it must be as a visiter, not as an inmate.

Why then bring me off some-how, that I may not seem the blunderer you are always making me by your *documents*—Will you do *that*?

When my uncle and aunt came in, they found Sir Charles, and Mr. Deane, and me, talking. Our subject was, the happiness of Lord and Lady W. and the whole Mansfield family, with whom Mr. Deane, who began the discourse, is well acquainted. Sir Charles arose at their entrance. The night draws on, said he—I will do myself the honour of attending you, madam, and this happy family, at tea in the morning—My good Mr. Selby, I had a design upon you, and Mr. Deane, and upon you, young gentleman (to my cousin James) as I told you on the road; but it is now too late. Adieu, till to-morrow—He bowed to each, to me profoundly, kissing my hand; and went to his chariot.

My uncle whispered my aunt, as we all attended him to that door of the hall which leads into the court-yard, to invite him to stay. Hang punctilio! he said.

My aunt wanted to speak to Sir Charles; yet, she owned, she knew not what to say: such a conscious awkwardness had indeed possession of us both, as made us uneasy: we thought all was not right; yet knew not that we were wrong. But when Sir Charles's chariot drove away with him, and we took our seats, and supper was talked of, we all of us shewed dissatisfaction; and my uncle was quite out of humour. He would give a thousand pounds, he said, with all his heart and soul, to find in the morning, Sir Charles, instead of coming hither to breakfast, had set out on his return to London.

For my part, Lady G. I could not bear these recriminations. I begged to be excused sitting down to supper. I was not well; and this odd situation added *uneasiness* to my indisposition: a dissatisfaction, that I find will mingle with our highest enjoyments: nor were the beloved company I left, happier. They canvassed the matter, with so much good-natured

earnestness, that the supper was taken away, as it was brought, at a late hour.

What, my dear Lady G. in your opinion, should we have done? Were we right, or were we wrong? Over-delicacy, as I have heard observed, is under-delicacy. You, my dear, your lord, our Emily, and Dr. Bartlett, all standing in so well-known a degree of relation to Sir Charles Grandison, were our most welcome guests: and was not the brother to be received with equal warmth of respect?—O no! Custom, it seems, tyrant custom, and the apprehended opinion of the world, obliged us (especially as so much bustle had been made about me, by men so bold, so impetuous) to shew him—Shew him what?—In effect, that we had expectations upon him, which we could not have upon his brother and sister; and therefore, because we hoped he would be more *near*, we were to keep him at the *greater* distance!—What an indirect acknowledgment was this in his favour, were there room for him to doubt! Which, however, there could not be. What would I give, said my aunt to me, this moment, to know *his* thoughts of the matter!

Friday morning.

Lucy and Nancy will be here at dinner; so will my grandmamma. She has, with her usual enquiries after my health, congratulated me by this line, sealed up:

'I long, my best love, to embrace you, on the joyful occasion. I need say no more, than that I think myself, at this instant, one of the happiest of women. I shall dine with you to day. Adieu, till then, joy of my heart, my own Harriet!'

Lucy, in a billet just now brought, written for

herself and Nancy, on the intelligence sent her of Sir Charles's arrival expresses herself thus:

'Our joy is extreme! Blessings on the man! Blessings attend our Harriet! They must: Sir Charles Grandison brings them with himself. Health now will return to our lovely cousin. We long to see the man of whom we have heard so much. We will dine with you. Tell Sir Charles, before we come, that you love us dearly: it shall make us redouble our endeavours to deserve your love. Your declared friendship, and love of us, will give consequence to

'LUCY }
'ANNE } SELBY.'

We are now in expectation—My aunt and I, though early risers, hurried ourselves to get every-thing, that however is never out of order, in higher order. Both of us have a kind of consciousness of defect, where yet we cannot find reason for it: if we did, we should supply it. Yet we are careful that every-thing has a natural, not an extraordinary, appearance—Ease, with propriety, shall be our aim. My aunt says, that were the king to make us a visit, she is sure she could not have a greater desire to please—I will go down, that I may avoid the appearance of parade and reserve, when he comes.

* *

Here, in her closet, again, is your poor Harriet. Surely the determined single state is the happiest of lives, to young women, who have the greatness of mind to be above valuing the admiration and flatteries of the other sex. What tumults, what a contrariety of passions, break the tranquillity of the

woman who yields up her heart to love?—No Sir Charles Grandison, my dear!—Yet ten o'clock!—He is a very *prudent* man!—No expectations *hurry* or *discompose* him! Charming *steadiness of soul!* A fine thing for himself, but *far* otherwise for the woman, when a man is *secure!* He will possibly ask me, and hold again my passive hand, in presence of half a score of my friends, Whether I was *greatly* uneasy because of his absence?

But let me try to *excuse* him. May he not have *forgot* his engagement? May he not have *overslept* himself?—Some *agreeable dream* of the Bologna family—I am offended at him—Did he learn this tranquillity in Italy?—O no, no, Lady G.!

I now cannot help looking back for *other* faults in him, with regard to me. My memory is not, however, so malicious, as I would have it be. But do you think every man, in the like situation, would have stopt at Stratford to dine by himself?—Not but your brother can be very happy in his *own* company. If *he* cannot, who can? But, as to that, his horses might require rest, as well as baiting: one knows not in how short a time he might have prosecuted his journey so far. He who will not suffer the noblest of all animals to be deprived of an ornament, would be merciful to them in greater instances. He says, that he cannot bear indignity from superiors. Neither can we. In that light he appears to us. But why so?—My heart, Lady G. begins to swell, I assure you; and it is twice as big as it was last night.

My uncle, before I came up, set with his watch in his hand, from half an hour after nine, till near ten, telling the minutes as they crept. Mr. Deane often looked at me, and at my aunt, as if to see how we bore it. I blushed; looked silly, as if your brother's faults were mine.—Over in a fortnight! cried my

uncle; *ads-heart*, I believe it will be half a year before we shall come to the question. But Sir Charles, to be sure, is offended. Your confounded female niceties!

My heart rose—Let him if he *dare*, thought the proud Harriet.

God grant, added my uncle, that he may be gone up to town again!

Perhaps, said Mr. Deane, he is gone, by mistake, to Mrs. Shirley's.

We then endeavoured to recollect the words of his self-invitation hither. My cousin James proposed to take horse, and go to Northampton, to inform himself of the occasion of his not coming: some misfortune, perhaps.

Had he not servants, my aunt asked, one of whom he might have sent?—Shall your cousin go, however, Harriet? said she.

No, indeed, answered I, with an air of anger. My teazing uncle broke out into a loud laugh, which however had more of vexedness than mirth in it.—He is certainly gone to London, Harriet! *Just* as I said, dame Selby!—Certainly tearing up the road; his very horses resenting, for their master, your *scrupulosities*. You'll hear from him next, at London, my life for yours, niece—Hah, hah, hah! What will your *grandmamma* say, by and by? Lucy, Nancy, how will *they* stare! Last night's supper, and this day's dinner, will be alike served in, and taken away.

I could not stand all this: I arose from my seat. Are you not unkind, Sir? said I to my uncle, courtesying to him however; and desiring his and Mr. Deane's excuse, quitted the breakfasting parlour. Teazing man! said my aunt. Mr. Deane also blamed him; gently, however: for every-body acknowledges his good heart, and natural good temper.

My aunt followed me to the door; and, taking my hand, Harriet, said she, speaking low, Not Sir Charles Grandison himself shall call you his, if he is capable of treating you with the least indifference. I understand not this, added she: he cannot surely be offended.—I hope all will be cleared up before your grandmamma comes: she will be very jealous of the honour of her girl.

I answered not: I could not answer: but hastened up to my place of refuge; and, after wiping from my cheeks a few tears of real vexation, took up my pen. You love to know my thoughts as occasions arise. You bid me continue to write to the moment —Here comes my aunt.

* *

My aunt came in, with a billet in her hand—Come down to breakfast, my dear: Sir Charles comes not till dinner-time. Read this: it was brought by one of his servants. He left it with Andrew. The dunce let him go. I wanted to have asked him a hundred questions.

TO MRS. SELBY.

DEAR MADAM,

I am broken in upon by a most *impertinent* visiter. Such, at this time, must have been the dearest friend I have in the world. You will be so good as to excuse my attendance till dinner-time. For the past two hours I thought every moment of disengaging myself, or I should have sent sooner.

Ever yours, &c.

What visiter, said I, can make a man stay, against his mind? Who can get rid politely of an *impertinent* visiter, if Sir Charles Grandison cannot, on a pre-

vious engagement?—But come, madam, I attend you.—Down we went.

My uncle was out of patience. I was sorry for it. I tried to make the best of it; yet, but to pacify him, should, perhaps, have had petulance enough myself to make the worst of it.—Oy, oy, with all my heart, said he, in answer to my excuses, let us hear what Sir Charles has to say for himself. But, old as I am, were my dame Selby to give me another chance, no man on earth, I can tell you, should keep me from a previous engagement with my mistress. It is kind of *you*, Harriet, to excuse him, however; love hides a multitude of faults.

My aunt said not one syllable in behalf of Sir Charles. She is vexed, and disappointed.

We made a very short breakfasting; and looked upon one another as people who would have helped themselves, if they could. Mr. Deane, however, would engage, he said, that we should be satisfied with Sir Charles's excuses, when we came to hear them.

But, my dear, this man, this visiter, whoever he is, must be of *prodigious* importance to detain him from an engagement that I had hoped might have been thought a *first* engagement:—yet owned to be *impertinent*. And must not the accident be very uncommon, that should bring such a one, stranger as Sir Charles is, in his way? Yet this might very well happen, my uncle observes, at an *inn*, whither we thought fit to send him.

Now I think of it, I was strangely disturbed last night in my imperfect slumbers: something, I thought, was to happen to prevent me ever being his. But hence, Recollection! I chase thee from me. Yet when realities disturb, shadows will officiously obtrude on the busy imagination *as* realities.

Friday, twelve o'clock.

My grandmamma is come—Lucy, Nancy, are come—O how vexed at our disappointment and chagrin are my two cousins! But my grandmamma joins with Mr. Deane, to think the best. I have stolen up. But here, he is come! How shall I do to *keep* my anger? He shall find me below. I will see how he looks, at entrance among us—*If* he is careless—*If* he makes slight excuses—

LETTER XVIII.

MISS BYRON. IN CONTINUATION.

Friday, two o'clock.

I AM stolen up again, to tell you how it is. I never will be petulant again—Dear Sir, forgive me! How wicked in us all, but my grandmamma and Mr. Deane, to blame a man who cannot be guilty of a wilful fault! The fault is all my aunt's and mine—Was my aunt ever in fault before?

We were all together when he entered. He addressed himself to us, in that noble manner which engages every body in his favour, at first sight. How, said he, bowing to every one, have I suffered, in being hindered, by an unhappy man, from doing myself the honour of attending you sooner!

You see, my dear, he made not apologies to *me*, as if he supposed me disappointed by his absence. I was afraid he would. I know I looked very grave.

He then particularly addressed himself to each; to me first; next to my grandmamma; and taking one of her hands between both his, and bowing upon it, I rejoice to see you, madam, said he—Your

last favours will ever be remembered by me, with gratitude. I see you well, I hope. Your Miss Byron will be well, if *you* are; and *our* joy (looking round him) will then be complete.

She bowed her head, pleased with his compliment; so were they all. I was still a little sullen; otherwise I should have been pleased too, that he made my health depend on that of my grandmamma.

Madam, said he, turning to my aunt, I am afraid I made you wait for me at breakfast. A most impertinent visiter! He put me out of humour. I dared not to let you and *yours* (looking at me) see how much I *could* be out of humour. I am naturally passionate: but passion is so ugly, so deforming a thing, that if I can help it, I will never, by those I love, be seen in it.

I am sorry, Sir, said my aunt, you met with any thing to disturb you.

My uncle's spirit had not come down: he, too, was sullen in behalf of the punctilio of the girl whom he honours with his jealous love. How, how, is that, Sir Charles? said he.

My aunt presented Lucy and Nancy to him: but before she could name either—Miss Selby, said he, Miss Byron's *own* Lucy, I am sure. Miss Nancy Selby!—I know your characters, ladies; saluting each, and I know the interest you have in Miss Byron.—Honour me with *your* approbation, and that will be to give me hope of *hers*.

He then turning to my uncle and Mr. Deane, and taking a hand of each—My dear Mr. Deane smiles upon me, said he—But Mr. Selby looks grave.

Attentive only, Sir Charles, to the *cause* of your being put out of humour, that's all—

The cause, Mr. Selby!—Know then, I met with a man at my inn, who would force himself upon me: Do you know I am a quarrelsome man? He was

so hardy as to declare, that he had pretensions to a lady in this company, which he was determined to assert.

O that Greville! said my aunt—

I was ready to sink. Wretched Harriet! thought I at the instant: am I to be for ever the occasion of embroiling this excellent man!

Dear, dear Sir Charles, said one, said another, all at once, How, how, was it?

Both safe! Both unhurt! replied he. No more of the rash man at this time. He is to be pitied. He loves Miss Byron to distraction.

This comes of nicety! whispered my uncle to my aunt; *foolish* nicety!—To let such a man as this go to an inn!—Inhospitable, vile punctilio! Then turning to Sir Charles—Dear Sir, forgive me! I *was* a little serious, that I must own [I pulled my uncle by the sleeve, fearing he would say too much by way of atonement for his seriousness]: I, I, I, *was* a little serious, I must own—I, I, I, was afraid something was the matter—turned he off, what he was going to say—*too* freely, shall I add?—Hardly so! had he said what he would; though habitual punctilio made me almost involuntarily twitch my uncle by the sleeve; for my heart would have directed my lips to utter the kindest things; but my concern was too great to allow them to obey it.

I must go down, Lady G.—I am enquired after; 'tis just dinner-time.—Let me only add, that Sir Charles waved further talk of the affair between him and that wretch, while I staid—Perhaps they have got it out of him since I came up.

* *

I shall be *so* proud, my dear!—A thousand fine things he has said of your Harriet, in her little absence! How is he respected, how is he admired, by

all my friends! My grandmamma, with all her equanimity, has much ado to suppress her joyful emotions: and he is so respectfully tender to her, that had he not my heart before, he would have won it now.

He had again waved the relation of the insult he met with: Mr. Greville himself, he supposed, would give it. He had a mind to see if the gentleman, by his report of it, was a gentleman. Thank God, said he, I have not hurt a man who boasts of his passion for Miss Byron; and of his neighbourhood to this family!

* *

Our places were chosen for us at table: Sir Charles's next me. Cannot I be too minute, do you say?—So easy, so free, so polite; something so happily addressed occasionally to each person at table—O my dear! I am abundantly kept in countenance; for every one loves him, as well as I. You have been pleased to take very favourable notice of our servants—They *are* good, and sensible. What reverence for him, and joy for their young mistress's sake, shone in their countenances, as they attended!

My cousin James, who has never been out of England, was very curious to be informed of the manners, customs, diversions, of the people in different countries—Italy, in particular—Ah the dear Clementina! What abatement from recollection! 'The sighing heart,' I remember he says, in one of his letters to Dr. Bartlett, 'will remind us of imperfection, in the highest of our enjoyments.' And he adds, 'It is fit it should be so.' And on what occasion did he write this?—O my Charlotte, *I* was the occasion. It was in kind remembrance of me. He could not, at that time, have so written, had he been indifferent, even then, to your Harriet.

I am so apprehensive of my uncle's after-remarks, that I am half afraid to look at Sir Charles: and he must by-and-by return to this wicked inn—They wonder at my frequent absences. It is to oblige you, Lady G. and indeed myself: there is vast pleasure in communicating our pleasures to a friend who interests herself, as you do, in our dearest concerns.

* *

You know and admire my grandmamma's cheerful compliances with the innocent diversions of youth. She made Lucy give us a lesson on the harpsichord, on purpose, I saw, to draw me in. We both obeyed.

I was once a little out in an Italian song. In what a sweet manner did he put me in! touching the keys himself, for a minute or two. Every one wished him to proceed; but he gave up to me, in so polite a manner, that we all were satisfied with his excuses.

My poor cousin James is on a sudden very earnest to go abroad; as if, silly youth, travelling would make him a Sir Charles Grandison!

I have just asked your brother, if all is over between Mr. Greville and him? He says, He hopes and believes so. God send it may; or I shall hate that Greville!

* *

My uncle, Mr. Deane, and my cousin James, were too much taken with Sir Charles, to think of withdrawing, as it might have been expected they would; and after some general conversation, which succeeded our playing, Sir Charles drew his chair between my grandmamma and aunt, and taking my gandmamma's hand, May I not be allowed a quarter of an hour's conversation with Miss Byron in your presence, ladies? said he, speaking low. We have indeed only friends and relations present: but it will

be most agreeable, I believe, to the dear lady, that what I have to say to her, and to you, may be rather reported *to* the gentlemen than heard *by* them.

By all means, Sir Charles, said my grandmamma. Then whispering to my aunt, No man in this company *thinks*, but Sir Charles. Excuse me, my dear.

The moment Sir Charles applied himself in this particular manner to them, my heart, without hearing what he said, was at my mouth. I arose, and withdrew to the cedar-parlour, followed by Lucy and Nancy. The gentlemen, seeming to recollect themselves, withdrew likewise, to another apartment. My aunt came to me—My Harriet!—But ah! my dear, how you tremble!—You must come with *me*. And then she told me what he had said to my grandmamma and her.

I have no courage—None at all, said I. If apprehension, if timidity, be signs of love, I have them all. Sir Charles Grandison has not one.

Nay, my dear, said Lucy, impute not to him want of respect, I beseech you.—*Respect*, my Lucy! What a poor word!—Had I only respect for him, we should be nearer an equality.—Has he said any-thing of Lady Clementina?

Don't be silly, Harriet, said my aunt. You used to be—

Used to be!—Ah, madam! Sir Charles's heart, at *best*, a divided heart! I never had a trial till now.

I tell you all my foibles, Lady G.

My aunt led me in to Sir Charles and my grandmamma. He met me at my entrance into the room, and in the most engaging manner, my aunt having taken her seat, conducted me to a chair which happened to be vacant between her and my grandmother. He took no notice of my emotion, and I the sooner recovered myself; and still the sooner, as he

himself seemed to be in some little confusion. However, he sat down, and with a manly, yet respectful air, his voice gaining strength as he proceeded, thus delivered himself:

Never, ladies, was man more particularly circumstanced than he before you. You know my story: you know what once were the difficulties of my situation with a family that I must ever respect; with a lady of it whom I must ever revere: and you, madam (to my grandmamma) have had the goodness to signify to me, in a most engaging manner, that Miss Byron has added to the innumerable instances which she has given me of her true greatness of mind, a *kind*, and even a *friendly* concern for a lady who is the Miss Byron of Italy. I ask not excuse for the comparison. The heart of the man before you, madam (to me) in sincerity and frankness, emulates your own.—

You want not excuse, Sir, said my grandmamma —We all reverence Lady Clementina: we admire her.

He bowed to *each* of us; as my aunt and I looked, I believe, assentingly to what my grandmamma said. He proceeded:

—Yet in so particular a situation, although what I have to say, may, I presume, be collected from what you know of my story; and though my humble application to Miss Byron for her favour, and to you, ladies, for your interest with her, have not been discouraged; something, however, may be necessary to be said, in this audience, of the state of my own heart, for the sake of this dear lady's delicacy and yours. And I will deliver myself with all the truth and plainness which I think are required in treaties of this nature, equally with those set on foot between nation and nation.

I am not insensible to beauty: but the beauty of

person *only*, never yet had power over more than my eye; to which it gave a pleasure like that which it receives from the flowers of a gay parterre. Had *not* my heart been out of the reach of *personal* attractions, if I may so express myself; and had I been my own master; Miss Byron, in the first hour that I saw her (for her beauty suffered not by her distress) would have left me no other choice: but when I had the honour of conversing with her, I observed in her mind and behaviour that true dignity, delicacy, and noble frankness, which I ever thought characteristic in the sex, but never met with, in equal degree, but in *one* lady. I soon found, that my admiration of her fine qualities was likely to lead me into a gentler, yet a more irresistible passion: for of the lady abroad I then could have no reasonable, at least no *probable* hope: yet were there circumstances between her and me, which I thought, in strict justice, obliged me to attend the issue of certain events.

I called myself therefore to account, and was alarmed when I found that Miss Byron's graces had stolen so imperceptibly on my heart, as already to have made an impression on it too deep for my tranquillity. I determined therefore, in honour, in justice, to both ladies, to endeavour to restrain a passion so new, yet likely to be so fervent.

I had avocations in town, while Miss Byron was with my sisters in the country. Almost afraid of trusting myself in her presence, I pursued the *more* willingly those avocations in person, when I could have managed some of them, perhaps, near as well, by other hands. Compassion for the one lady, because of her calamity, might at that time, I found, have been made to give way, *could those calamities have been overcome*, to love for the other. Nor was it difficult for me to observe, that my sisters and Lord L.

who knew nothing of my situation, would have chosen for a sister the young lady present, before every other woman.

Sometimes, I will own to you, I was ready, from that self-partiality and vanity which is too natural to men of vivacity and strong hopes, to flatter myself, that I might, *by my sister's interest*, have made myself *not unacceptable* to a lady, who seemed to be wholly disengaged in her affections: but I would not permit myself to dwell on such hopes: every look of complaisance, every smile, which used to beam over that lovely countenance, I attributed to her natural goodness and frankness of heart, and to that grateful spirit which made her over-rate a common service that I had been so happy as to render her. Had I even been free, I should have been careful not to deprive myself of that animating sunshine, by a too early declaration. For well did I know, by *other* men's experience, that Miss Byron, at the same time that her natural politeness, and sweetness of manners, engaged every heart, was not, however, easily to be won.

But, notwithstanding all my efforts to prevent a competition which had grown so fast upon me, I still found my uneasiness increase with my affection for Miss Byron. I had then but one way left—It was, to strengthen my heart, in Clementina's cause, by Miss Byron's assistance: in short, to acquaint Miss Byron with my situation; to engage her generosity for Clementina, and thereby deprive myself of the encouragement my fond heart might have hoped for, had I indulged my wishes of obtaining her favour. My end was answered, as to the latter. Miss Byron's generosity was engaged for the lady; but was it possible that my obligations to her for that generosity should not add to my admiration of her?

At the time I laid before her my situation (it was in Lord L.'s study at Colnebrooke) she saw my emo-

tion. I could not conceal it. My abrupt departure from her must convince her, that my heart was too much engaged for that situation*. I desired Dr. Bartlett to take an airing with me, in hopes, by his counsels, to compose my disordered spirits†. He knew the state of my heart: he knew, with regard to the proposals I had formerly made to the family at Bologna, relating to religion and residence (as I had also declared to the brothers of the lady) that no worldly grandeur should ever have induced me to allow, in a *beginning* address, the terms I was willing, as a compromise, to allow to that lady; for thoroughly had I weighed the inconveniencies which must attend such an alliance: the lady zealous in her religion; the confessor who was to be allowed her, equally zealous; the spirit of making proselytes so strong, and held by Roman Catholics to be so meritorious; and myself no less in earnest in my religion; I had no doubt to pronounce, I told the good doctor in confidence, 'that I should be much more happy in marriage with the lady of Selby-house, were she to be induced to honour me with her hand, than it was possible I could be with Lady Clementina, even were they to comply with the conditions I had proposed; as I doubted not but that lady would *also* be, were her health restored, with a man of her own nation and religion:' and I owned to him, besides, 'that I could have no hope of conquering the opposition given me by the friends of Clementina; and that I could not at times but think hardly of the indignities cast upon me by some of them.'

The doctor, I knew, at the same time that he lamented the evil treatment Clementina met with from her mistaken friends, and her unhappy malady; and admired her for her manifold excellencies; next to

* See Vol. III. p. 201. † Ibid. p. 202.

adored Miss Byron: and he gave his voice accordingly. 'But here, doctor, is the case, said I—Clementina is a woman with whom I had the honour of being acquainted before I knew Miss Byron: Clementina has infinite merits: she herself refused me not: *she* consented to accept of the terms I offered: she even besought her friends to comply with them. She has an opinion of my honour, and of my tenderness for her. Till I had the happiness of knowing Miss Byron, I was determined to await either her recovery or release; and will Miss Byron herself, if she knows that, forgive me (the circumstances not changed) for the change of a resolution of which Clementina was so worthy? The treatment the poor lady has met with, *for my sake*, as once [illegible] wrote, though virgin modesty induced her to [illegible]ross out those words, has heightened her disorder. She still, to this moment, wishes to see me: while there is a possibility, though not a probability, of my being made the humble instrument of restoring an excellent woman, who in herself deserves from me every consideration of tenderness, *ought* I to wish to engage the heart (were I able to succeed in my wishes) of the *equally*-excellent Miss Byron?—Could I be happy in my own mind, were I to try, and to succeed? And if not, must I not be as ungrateful to her, as ungenerous to the other?—Miss Byron's happiness cannot depend on *me*. She *must* be happy in the happiness she will give to the man of her choice, *whoever* shall be the man!'

We were all silent. My grandmamma and aunt seemed determined to be so; and I *could* not speak. He proceeded:

You knew not, dear Miss Byron, I wished you *not* to know, the conflicts my mind laboured with, when I parted with you on my going abroad. My destiny

was wrapt up in doubt and uncertainty. I was invited over: Signor Jeronymo was deemed irrecoverable: he wished to see me, and desired but to *live* to see me. My presence was requested as a last effort to recover his noble sister. You yourself, madam, applauded my resolution to go: but, that I might not be thought to wish to engage you in my favour (so circumstanced as I was, that to have done so, would have been to have acted unworthily to *both* ladies) I insinuated my hopelessness of ever being nearer to you than I was.

I was not able to take a formal leave of you. I went over. Success attended the kind, the soothing treatment which Clementina met with from her friends. Success also attended the means used for the recovery of the noble Jeronymo. Conditions were ag[ain] proposed. Clementina, on her restoration, shon[e] upon us all even with a brighter lustre than she di[d] before her disorder. All her friends consente[d] to reward with the hand of their beloved daughter, t[he] man to whom they attributed secondarily the go[od] they rejoiced in. I own to you, ladies, that what was before *honour* and *compassion*, now became *admiration;* and I should have been unjust to the merits of so excellent a woman, if I could not say, *love.* I concluded myself already the husband of Clementina; yet it would have been strange, if the welfare and happiness of Miss Byron were not the next wish of my heart. I rejoiced that (despairing as I did of such an event before I went over, because of the articles of religion and residence) I had not sought to engage more than her friendship; and I devoted myself wholly to Clementina—*I own it, ladies*—And had I thought, angel, as she came out, upon proof, that I could not have given her my heart, I had been equally unjust, and ungrateful. For, dear la-

dies, if you know all her story, you must know, that occasion called her out to act gloriously; and that gloriously she answered the call.

He paused. We were still silent. My grandmamma and aunt looked at each other by turns. But their eyes as well as mine, at different parts of his speech, shewed their sensibility. He proceeded, gracefully looking down, and at first with some little hesitation:

I am sensible, it is with a very ill grace, that *refused* as I must in justice call it, though on the noblest motives, by Clementina, I come to offer myself, and so soon after her refusal, to a lady of Miss Byron's delicacy. I should certainly have acted more laudably, respecting my own character *only*, had I taken at least the usual time of a *widower-love*. But great minds, such as Miss Byron's, and yours, ladies, are above common forms, where decorum is not neglected. As to myself, what do I, but declare a passion, that would have been, but for one obstacle, which is now removed, as fervent as man ever knew? Dr. Bartlett has told me, madam [*to me*], that you and my sisters have seen the letters I wrote to him from Italy: by the contents of some of those, and of the letters I left with *you*, madam [*to my grandmamma*], you have seen Clementina's constant adherence to the step she so greatly took. In this letter, received but last Wednesday [taking one out of his bosom], you will see (my last letters to them unreceived, as they must be) that I am urged by all her family, for the sake of setting *her* an example, to address myself to a lady of my own country. This *impels* me, as I may say, to *accelerate* the humble tender of my vows to you, madam. However hasty the step may be thought, in my situation, would not an inexcusable neglect, or seeming indifference, as if I were balancing as to the person,

have been attributable to me, had I, for *dull* and *cold* form's sake, been capable of postponing the declaration of my affection to Miss Byron? And if, madam, you can so far get over observances, which perhaps, on consideration, will be found to be punctilios only, as to give your heart, with your hand, to a man who himself has been perplexed by what some would call (particular as it sounds) a *double love* (an embarrassment, however, not of his own seeking, or which he could possibly avoid) you will lay him under obligation to your goodness (to your magnanimity, I will call it) which all the affectionate tenderness of my life to come will never enable me to discharge.

He then put the letter (a translation of it inclosed) into my hand. I have already answered it, madam, said he, and acquainted my friend, that I have actually tendered myself to the acceptance of a lady worthy of a sisterly relation to their Clementina; and have not been rejected. Your goodness must enable me (I humbly hope it will) to give them still stronger assurances of your favour: on my happiness they have the generosity to build a part of their own.

Not well before, I was more than once apprehensive of fainting, as he talked; agreeable as was his talk, and engaging as was his manner. My grandmamma and aunt saw my complexion change at his particular address to me, in the last part of his speech. I held my handkerchief now to my eyes, and now as a cover to my self-felt varying cheek.

In the most respectful and graceful manner he pressed a hand of each with his lips; mine twice. I could not speak. My grandmamma and aunt, delighted, yet tears standing in their eyes, looked upon each other, and upon me; each as expecting the other to speak.

I have perhaps (said he, with some emotion) taken up too much of Miss Byron's attention on this my first personal declaration: I will now return to the company. To-morrow I will do myself the honour to dine with you. We will for this evening postpone the important subject. Miss Byron, I presume, will be best pleased to have it so. I shall to-morrow be favoured with the result of your deliberations. Mean time may I meet with an interceding friend in every one I have had the pleasure to see this day! I must flatter myself with the honour of Miss Byron's *whole* heart, as well as with the approbation of all her friends. I cannot be thought, at *present*, to deserve it; but it shall be the endeavour of my life so to do.

He withdrew, with a grace which was all his own.

The moment he was gone from us, my grandmamma threw her arms about her Harriet, then about my aunt; and they congratulated me, and each other.

We were all pained at heart, when we read the letter. It is from Signor Jeronymo, urging your brother to set the example to his sister, which they so much want her to follow. I send you the translation. Poor Lady Clementina! Without seeing the last letters he wrote to them, she seems to be tired into compliance. I will not say one half that is upon my mind on this occasion, as you will have the letter before you. His last written letters will not favour her wishes. Poor lady! Can I forbear to pity her? And still the more is she to be pitied, as your brother's excellencies rise upon us.

I besought my aunt to excuse me to the company.

Sir Charles joined his friends [*his* friends indeed they all are!] with a vivacity in his air and manner, which charmed every body; while the silly heart of your Harriet would not allow her to enter into

company the whole night. Indeed it wanted the inducement of his presence; for, to every one's regret, he declined staying supper; yet my uncle put it to him—What, Sir, do you choose to sup at your inn? My uncle will have it, that Sir Charles *looked* an answer of displeasure for suffering him to go to it at all. My uncle is a good natured man. He will sometimes concede, when he is not convinced; and on every appearance which makes for his opinion, we are sure to hear of it.

I shall have an opportunity to-morrow morning early [this morning I *might* say] to send this long letter by a neighbour, who is obliged to ride post to town on his own affairs.

Had I *not* had this agreeable employment, rest, I am sure, would not have come near me. Your brother, I hope, has found it. Remember, I always mean to include my dear Lady L. in this correspondence: any-body else, but discretionally. My dear ladies both, adieu.

HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER XIX.

SIGNOR JERONYMO DELLA PORRETTA TO SIR CHARLES GRANDISON.

Bologna, Sunday, { September 24. / October 5.

We have at last, my Grandison, some hopes given us, that our dear Clementina will yield to our wishes.

The general, with his lady, made us a visit from Naples, on purpose to make a decisive effort, as he called it; and vowed that he would not return till he left her in a disposition to oblige us. The bishop

at one time brought the patriarch to reason with her; who told her, that she ought not to think of the veil, unless her father and mother consented to her assuming it.

"Mrs. Beaumont was prevailed upon to favour us with her company. She declared for us: and on Thursday last Clementina was still harder set. Her father, mother, the general, and his lady, the bishop, all came into my chamber, and sent for her. She came. Then did we all supplicate her to oblige us. The general was at first tenderly urgent: the bishop besought her: the young marchioness pressed her: my mother took her hand between both hers, and in silent tears could only sigh over it: and, lastly, my father dropt down on one knee to her—My daughter, my child, said he, oblige me. Your Jeronymo could not refrain from tears.

She fell on her knees—O my father, said she, rise, or I shall die at your feet!—Rise my father!

Not, my dear, till you consent to oblige me.

Grant me but a little time, my father! my dear, my indulgent father!

The general thought he saw a flexibility which we had never before seen in her on this subject, and called upon her for her *instant* determination. Shall a father kneel in vain? said he. Shall a mother in weeping silence in vain entreat?—Now, my sister, comply—or—He sternly stopt.

Have patience with me, said she, but till the chevalier's next letters come: you expect them soon. Let me receive his next letter. And, putting her hand to her forehead—Rise, my father, or I die at your feet!

I thought the general pushed too hard. I begged that the next letters might be waited for.

Be it so, said my father, rising, and raising her: but whatever be the contents, remember, my dear-

est child, that I am your father, your indulgent father; and oblige me.

Will not this paternal goodness, my dear Clementina, said the general, prevail upon you? Your father, mother, brothers, are all ready to kneel to you; yet are we all to be slighted? And is a foreigner, an Englishman, a heretic (great and noble as is the man; a man, too, whom you have so gloriously refused) to be preferred to us all? Who can bear the thoughts of such a preference!

And remember, my sister, said the bishop, that you already know his opinion. You have already had his advice, in the letters he wrote to you in the month's correspondence which passed between you, before he left Italy. Think you, that the Chevalier Grandison can recede from an opinion solemnly given, the circumstances not having varied?

I have not been well. It is wicked to oppose my father, my mother: I cannot argue with my brothers. I have not been well. Spare me, spare me, my lords, to the general and the bishop. My father gives me time: don't *you* deny it me.

My mother, afraid of renewing her disorder, said; Withdraw, my dear, if you choose to do so, and compose yourself: the intention is not to compel, but to persuade you.

O madam! said she, persuasion so strongly urged by my parents, is *more* than compulsion.—I take the liberty you give me.

She hurried to Mrs. Beaumont, and, throwing her arms about her, O madam, I have been oppressed! Oppressed by persuasion! By a kneeling father! By a weeping mother! By entreating brothers!—And this is but persuasion!—Cruel persuasion!

Mrs. Beaumont then entered into argument with her. She represented to her the general's inflexibility: her father's and mother's indulgence: the

wishes of her two other brothers: she pleaded your opinion given as an impartial man, not merely as a Protestant: she told her of an admirable young lady of your own country, who was qualified to make you happy; of whom she had heard several of your countrymen speak with great distinction. This last plea, as the intimate friendship between you and Mrs. Beaumont is so well known, took her attention. She would not for the world stand in the way of the Chevalier Grandison. She wished *you* to be happy, she said, whatever became of *her*. Father Marescotti strongly enforced this point; and advised her to come to some resolution, *before* your next letters arrived, as it was not to be doubted but the contents of them would support your former opinion. The patriarch's arguments were re-urged with additional force. A day was named when she was again to be brought before her assembled friends. Mrs. Beaumont applauded her for the magnanimity she had already shewn, in the discharge of her duty to Heaven; and called upon her to distinguish herself equally in the filial.

Clementina took time to consider of these and other arguments; and after three hours passed in her closet, she gave the following written paper to Mrs. Beaumont; which, she said, she hoped, when read in full assembly, would excuse her from attending her friends in the proposed congress.

'I am tired out, my dear *Mrs. Beaumont*, with your kindly-meant importunities:

'With the importunities, prayers, and entreaties, of my *brothers*.

'O my *mamma*, how well do you deserve even implicit obedience, from a daughter who has overclouded your happy days! You never knew discomfort till your hapless Clementina gave it you!

The sacrifice of my life would be a poor atonement for what I have made you suffer.

'But who can withstand a *kneeling* father? Indeed my father, ever good, ever indulgent, I dread to see you; let me not again behold you as on Thursday last.

'I have denied to myself, and *such* the motive, that I must not, I do not repent it, the man I esteemed. I never can be his.

'Father Marescotti, though he now loves the *man*, suggests, that my late disorder might be a judgment upon me for suffering my heart to be engaged by an *heretic*.

'I am absolutely forbidden to think of atoning for my fault by the only measure that, in my opinion, could have done it.

'You tell me, Mrs. Beaumont, and all my friends join with you, that honour, generosity, and the esteem which I avow for the Chevalier Grandison, as my friend, as my fourth brother, all join to oblige me to promote the happiness of a man I myself have disappointed. And you are of opinion, that there is one particular woman of his own country, who is capable of making him happy—But do you say, that I ought to give the *example*?—Impossible. Honour, and the punctilio of woman, will not permit me to do *that*!—

'But thus pressed; thus dreading again to see a *kneeling* father; a weeping mother; and having reason to think I may not live long; that a relapse into my former malady, with the apprehensions of which Father Marescotti terrifies me, may be the punishment of my disobedience [Cruel Father Marescotti, to terrify me with an affliction I so much dread!]; and that it will be a consolation to me, in my departing hour, to reflect that I have obeyed my parents in an article on which their hearts are im-

moveably fixed; and still further being assured, that they will look upon my resignation as a compensation for all the troubles I have given them, for many, many months passed—God enable me, I pray, to resign to *their* will. But if I *cannot*, shall I be still entreated, still persuaded?—I hope not.—I will do my endeavour to prevail on myself to obey—But whatever be the event of my self-contendings, Grandison must give the example.'

How, my Grandison, did we congratulate ourselves, when we read this paper, faint as are the hopes it gives us!

Our whole endeavour is now, to treat her with tender observance, that she may not think of receding. Nor will we ask her to see the person she knows we favour, till we can assure her, that you will set her the example. And if there be a lady with whom you think you could be happy, may not this, my dear Grandison, pleaded by you, be a motive with her?

The Count of Belvedere has made overtures to us, which are too great for our acceptance, were this alliance to take place. We have been told, but not by himself, the danger to which his despair had subjected him, in more than one visit to you at Bologna, had you not borne with his rashness. You know him to be a man of probity, of piety. He is a zealous Catholic; and you must allow, that a religious zeal is a strengthener, a confirmer, of all the social sanctions. He is learned; and, being a domestic man, he, contrary to the Italian custom, admires in a wife those intellectual improvements which make a woman a fit companion for her husband. You know how much the marchioness excels almost all the women of quality in Italy, in a taste for polite literature: you know she has encouraged the same taste in her daughter; and the count considers her

as the only woman in Italy with whom he can be happy.

As you, my Grandison, cannot now be my brother by marriage, the Count of Belvedere is the only man in the world I can wish to be so. He is of Italy. My sister, always so dear to us, and he, will be ever with us, or we with them. He knows the unhappy way she has been in: and was so far from making that an objection, that when her malady was at the height (being encouraged by physicians to hope that her recovery would be the probable consequence) he would have thought himself the happiest of men, could he have been honoured with her hand. He knows her love of you. He adores her for her motive of refusing you. He loves you; and is confident of the inviolable honour of both: whose alliance, on all these considerations, can be so desirable to us as that with the Count of Belvedere?

Surely, my dear friend, it must be in your power to set the example: in *yours*, who could subdue a whole family of zealous Catholics, and keep your own religion; and who could engage the virgin heart of one of the most delicate women in the world. What woman, who has a heart to bestow; what family, that has a daughter or sister to give; can withstand you? Religion and country of both the same?

Give us hope, therefore, my dear Grandison, that you will make the effort. Assure us, that you will not scruple, if you can succeed, to set the example; and on this assurance we will claim from Clementina the effects of the hope she has given us: and if we *can* prevail, will in England return you thanks for the numberless favours you have conferred upon us.

Thus earnestly, as well from inclination, as in compliance with the pressing entreaties of every

one of a family which I hope are still, and ever will be, dear to you, do I, your Jeronymo, your brother, your friend, solicit you. Mrs. Beaumont joins with us. She scruples not, she bids me tell you, to pronounce, that you and Clementina will both be more happy; she, with the Count of Belvedere [your respective countries so distant, your religion so different]; you, with an English woman; than you could have been with each other. Mrs. Beaumont has owned to me in private, that you often in conversation with her, even while you had hope of calling Clementina yours, lamented, for her sake, as well as your own, the unhappy situation, with respect to religion, you were both in; and that you had declared more than once to her, as indeed you did once to us, that in a *beginning* address you would not have compromised thus with a princess. May we not expect every thing, my Grandison, from your magnanimity? We hope it is in your *power*, and we doubt not your *will*, to contribute to our happiness. But whatever be the event, I beseech you, my dear friend, continue to love your

JERONYMO.

LETTER XX.

LADY G. TO MISS BYRON.

Grosvenor-square, Sunday, October 15.

CAN I forgive your pride, your petulance?—No, Harriet; positively no! I write to scold you; and having *ordered* my lord to sup abroad, I shall perhaps *oblige* you with a long letter. We honest folks, who have not abundance of love fooling upon our

hands, find ourselves happy in a good deal of quiet leisure; and I love to chide and correct you wise ones.—Thus then I begin—

Ridiculous parade among you! I blame you all. Could he not have been Mrs. Shirley's guest, if he was not to be permitted to repose under the same roof with his sovereign lady and mistress? But must you let him go to an inn?—What for? Why to shew the world he was but on a foot, at present, with your other humble servants; and be *thought* no more, by the insolent Greville, and affronted as an invader of his rights. Our sex is a foolish sex: too little or too much parade. Yet, Lord help us! were it not that we must be afraid to appear over-forward to the man *himself*, we should treat the opinion of the world with contempt.

And yet, after all, what with Lady Clementina, what with the world, and what with our own punctilio, and palpitating hearts, and-so-forth, and all that, and more than all that; I own you are pretty nicely circumstanced. But, my life for yours, you will behave like a simpleton, on occasion of his next address to you: Did you ever know that people did not, who were full of apprehensions, who aimed at being very delicate, who were solicitous to take their measures from the judgment of those without them; pragmatical souls, perhaps, who form their notions either on what they have *read*, or by the addresses to them of their own silly fellows, awkward and unmeaning, and by no means to be compared, for integrity, understanding, politeness, to my brother? Consider, child, that he having seen, in different countries, perhaps a hundred women, equally specious with the present mistress of his destiny, were form and outward grace to be the attractives, is *therefore* fitter to *give* than *take* the example.

But, Harriet, I write to charge you not to increase

your own difficulties by too much parade: your frankness of heart is a prime consideration with him. He expects not to meet with the *girl,* but the *sensible woman,* in his address to you. He is pursuing a laudable end—Don't teaze him with pug's tricks—'What, my dear Lady G. should we have done?' say you.—What signifies asking me now? Did you not lay your heads together? And the wisest which ever were set on women's shoulders? But indeed I never knew consultations of any kind turn to account. It is only a parcel of people getting together, proposing doubts, and puzzling one another, and ending as they began, if not worse. Doctors differ. So many persons, so many minds.

And O how your petulant heart throbbed with indignation, because he came not to breakfast with you! What benefit has a polite man over an unpolite one, where the latter shall have his rusticity allowed for (O *that is his way!*) and when the other has expectations drawn upon him, which, if not *critically* answered, he is not to be forgiven!—He is a *prudent* man! He may have *overslept* himself—Might dream of *Clementina.* Then it was a fault in him, that he staid to dine on the road—His horses might want rest, truly!—Upon my word, Harriet, a woman in love, is—a woman in love. Wise or foolish before, we are all equally foolish then: the same froward, petulant, captious, babies!—I protest, we are very silly creatures, all of us, in these circumstances; and did not love make men as great fools as ourselves, they would hardly think us worthy of their pursuit. Yet I am so true to the free-masonry myself, that I would think the man who should dare to say half I have written, of our *dollships,* ought not to go away with his life.

My sister and I are troubled about this Greville. Inform us, the moment you can, of the particulars

of what passed between my brother and him; pray do.

Caroline and I are as much concerned for your honour, your punctilio, as you, or any of you, can be. But by the account you give of my brother's address to you in presence of your grandmother and aunt, as well as from our knowledge of his politeness, neither you nor we need to trouble our heads about it: it may be all left to him. He knows so well what becomes the character of the woman whom he hopes to call his wife, that you will be sure of your dignity being preserved, if you place a confidence in him. And yet no man is so much above mere formal regards as he is. Let me enumerate instances, from your letter before me.

His own intention, in the first place, not to surprise you by his visits, as you apprehended he would, which would have made him look like a man of self-imagined consequence to you—His providing himself with accommodations at an inn; and not giving way to the invitation, even of your *sagacious* uncle Selby [I must railly him. Does he spare me?]—His singling you out on Friday from your men-friends, yet giving you the opportunity of your aunt's and grandmother's company, to make his personal application to you for your favour—His requesting the interest of your other friends with you, as if he presumed not on your former acquaintance, and this after an application, not discouraged, made to your friends and you.

As to his equanimity in his first address to you; his retaining your hand, forsooth, before all your friends, and-so-forth; never find fault with that, Harriet. [Indeed you do make an excuse for the very freedom you blame—*So* lover like!—] He is the very man, that a conscious young woman, as you are, should wish to be addressed by: so much

courage, yet so much true modesty—What, I warrant, you would have had a man chalked out for you, who should have stood at distance, bowed, scraped, trembled; while you had nothing to do, but bridle, and make stiff courtesies to him, with your hands before you—Plagued with *his* doubts, and with *your own* diffidences; afraid he would *now*, and *now*, and *now*, pop out the question; which he had not the courage to put; and so running on, simpering, fretting, fearing, two parallel lines, side by side, and never meeting; till some interposing friends, in pity to you both, put one's head pointing to the other's head, and stroking and clapping the shoulders of each, set you at each other, as men do by other dunghil-bred creatures.

You own, he took no notice of your emotion, when he first addressed himself to you; so gave you an opportunity to look up, which otherwise you would have wanted. Now don't you think you know a man creature or two, who would, on such an occasion, have grinned you quite out of countenance, and insulted you with their pity for being modest?—But you own, that he had emotion too, when he first opened his mind to you—What a duce would the girl have?—Orme and Fowler in your head, no doubt! The tremblings of rejected men, and the fantasies of romantic women, were to be a rule to my brother, I suppose, with your mock-majesty!—Ah, Harriet! Did I not say that we women are very silly creatures?—But my brother is a *good* man—So we must have something to find fault with him for.—Hah, hah, hah, hah. What do you laugh at, Charlotte?—What do I laugh at, Harriet?—Why, at the idea of a couple of *loveyers*, taken each with a violent ague-fit, at their first approach to each other—Hands shaking—Knees trembling—Lips quivering—Tongue faltering—

Teeth chattering—I had a good mind to present you with an ague-dialogue between such a trembling couple.—I, I, I, I, says the lover— You, you, you, you, says the girl, if able to speak at all. But, Harriet, you shall have the whole on demand. Rave at me, if you will: but love, as it is called by boys and girls, shall ever be the subject of my ridicule. Does it not lead us girls into all manner of absurdities, inconveniencies, undutifulness, disgrace?—Villainous cupidity!—It does.

To be serious—Neither does my brother address you in a stile that impeaches either his own understanding, or yours.—Another fault, Harriet, is it not?—But sure you are not so *very* a girl!

The justice he does to Lady Clementina and her family [let me be very serious, when I speak of Clementina] is a glorious instance as well of his greatness of mind, as of his sincerity. He has no need to depreciate one lady, to help him to exalt (or do justice, I should rather say, to) another. By praising her, he makes noble court to you, in supposing you, as you are, one of the most generous of women. How great is his compliment to *both* ladies, when he calls Clementina the Miss Byron of Italy! Who, my dear, ever courted woman as my brother courts you? Indeed there can be but very few men who have such a woman to court.

He suffers you not to ask for an account of the state of his heart from the time he knew you first, till now. He gives it to you unasked. And how glorious is that account, both to you, and himself!

Let us look back upon his conduct when last in Italy, and when every step seemed to lead to his being the husband of another woman.

The recovery of Clementina, and of her noble brother, seem to be the *consequence* of his friendly goodness. The grateful family all join to reward

him, with their darling's hand; her heart supposed to be already his. He, like the man of honour he is, concludes himself bound by his former offers. They accept him upon those terms. The lady's merits shine out with transcendent lustre in the eyes of every one, even of us his sisters, and of *you*, Harriet, and your best friends: must they not in *his*, to whom *merit* was ever the *first*, *beauty* but the *second* attractive? He had no tie to any other woman on earth: he had only the tenderness of his own heart, with regard to Miss Byron, to contend with. *Ought* he not to have contended with it? He *did*; and so far conquered, as to enable himself to be *just* to the lady, whose great qualities, and the concurrence of her friends in his favour, had converted compassion for her into love. And who, that hears her story, can forbear to love her? But with what tenderness, with what politeness, does he, in his letter to his chosen correspondent, express himself of Miss Byron! He declares, that if *she* were not to be happy, it would be a great abatement of his own felicity. You, however, remember how politely he recals his apprehensions that you may not, on his account, be altogether so happy as he wishes, as the suggestions of his own presumption; and censures himself for barely supposing, that he had been of consequence enough with you to give you pain.

How much to your honour, before he went over, does he account for your smiles, for your frankness of heart, in his company! He would not build upon them: nor indeed could he know the state of your heart, as *we* did: he had not the opportunity. How silly was your punctilio, that made you sometimes fancy it was out of mere compassion that he revealed to you the state of his engagement abroad! You see he tells you, that such was his opinion of your greatness of mind, that he thought he had no other way

but to put it in your power to check him, if his love for you should stimulate him to an act of neglect to the lady to whom (she having never refused him, and not being then in a condition either to claim him, or set him free) he thought himself under obligation. Don't you revere him for his honour to her, the nature of her malady considered?—What must he have suffered, in this conflict!

Well, and now, by a strange turn in the lady, but glorious to herself, as he observes, the obstacle removed, he applies to Miss Byron for her favour. How sensible is he of what delicacy requires from her! How justly (respecting his love for you) does he account for not postponing, for the sake of *cold* and *dull* form, as he properly expresses it, his address to you! How greatly does the letter he delivered to you, favour his argument! Ah the poor Clementina! *Cruel* persuaders her relations! I hate and pity them, in a breath. Never, before, did hatred and pity meet in the same bosom, as they do in mine, on this occasion. His difficulties, my dear, and the uncommon situation he is in, as if he were offering you but a divided love, enhance your glory. You are reinstated on the female throne, to the lowermost step of which you once was afraid you had descended. You are offered a man, whose perplexities have not proceeded from the entanglements of intrigue, inconstancy, perfidy; but from his own compassionate nature: and could you, by any other way in the world than by this supposed divided love, have had it in your power, by accepting his humbly-offered hand, to lay him under obligation to you, which he thinks he never shall be able to discharge? Lay *him*—Who?—SIR CHARLES GRANDISON—For whom so many virgin hearts have sighed in vain!—And what a triumph to our sex is this, as well as to my Harriet!

And now, Harriet, let me tell you, that my sister and I are both in great expectations of your next letter. It is, it must be, written before you will have this. My brother is more than man: you have only to shew yourself to be superior to the *forms* of woman. If you play the fool with him, now, that you have the power you and we have so long wished you —If you give pain to his noble, because sincere heart, by any the least shadow of female affectation; you, who have hitherto been distinguished for so amiable a frankness; you, who cannot doubt his honour—the honour of a man who solicits your favour in even a *great* manner, a manner in which no man before him ever courted a woman, because few men before him have ever been so particularly circumstanced; a manner that gives you an opportunity to outshine, in your acceptance of him, even the noble Clementina in her refusal; as bigotry must have been, in part, her motive—If, I say, you act foolishly, weakly, now—Look to it—You will depreciate, if not cast away, your own glory. Remember you have a man to deal with, who, from the behaviour of us his sisters to Mrs. Oldham, at his first return to England, took measure of our minds, and, without loving us the less for it, looked down upon us with pity; and made us, ever since, look upon ourselves in a diminishing light, and as sisters who have greater reason to glory in their brother, than he has in them. Would you not rather, you who are to stand in a still nearer relation to him, invite his admiration, than his pity? Till last Friday night you had it: what Saturday has produced, we shall soon guess.

Not either Lord L. or Lord G. not Emily, not aunt Eleanor, now, either see or hear read what you write, except here-and-there a passage, which you yourself would not scruple to hear read to them. Are

you not our sister? To each of us our next self: and, what gives you still more dignity, the elected wife of our brother!

Adieu, my love! In longing expectation of your next, we subscribe

Your affectionate

CAROLINE L.
CHARLOTTE G.

LETTER XXI.

MISS BYRON TO LADY G.

Saturday, October 14.

MR. Fenwick has just now been telling us, from the account given him by that Greville, vile man! how the affair was between him and Sir Charles Grandison. Take it briefly, as follows:

About eight yesterday morning, that audacious wretch went to the George at Northampton; and after making his enquiries, demanded an audience of Sir Charles Grandison. Sir Charles was near dressed, and had ordered his chariot to be ready, with intent to visit us early.

He admitted of Mr. Greville's visit. Mr. Greville confesses, that his own behaviour was *peremptory* (his word for *insolent*, I suppose). I hear, Sir, said he, that you are come down into this county in order to carry off from us the richest jewel in it—I need not say whom. My name is Greville: I have long made my addresses to her, and have bound myself under a vow, that, were a prince to be my competitor, I would dispute his title to her.

You seem to be a *princely* man, Sir, said Sir Charles, offended with his air and words, no doubt.

You need not, Mr. Greville, have told me your name: I have heard of you. What *your* pretensions are, I know not; your vow is nothing to me: I am master of my own actions; and shall not account to you, or any man living, for them.

I presume, Sir, you came down with the intention I have hinted at? I beg only your answer as to that. I beg it as a favour, gentleman to gentleman.

The manner of your address to me, Sir, is not such as will intitle you to an answer for your *own* sake. I will tell you, however, that I am come down to pay my devoirs to Miss Byron. I hope for acceptance; and know not that I am to make allowance for the claim of any man on earth.

Sir Charles Grandison, I know your character: I know your bravery. It is from that knowledge that I consider you as a fit man for me to talk to. I am not a Sir Hargrave Pollexfen, Sir.

I make no account of *who* or *what* you are, Mr. Greville. Your visit is not, at this time, a welcome one: I am going to breakfast with Miss Byron. I shall be here in the evening, and at leisure, then, to attend to any-thing you shall think yourself authorized to say to me, on this or any other subject.

We may be overheard, Sir—Shall I beg you to walk with me into the garden below? you are going to breakfast, you say, with Miss Byron. *Dear* Sir Charles Grandison, oblige me with an audience, of five minutes only, in the back-yard, or garden.

In the evening, Mr. Greville, command me any-where: but I will not be broken in upon now.

I will not leave you at liberty, Sir Charles, to make your visit where you are going, till I am gratified with one five minutes conference with you below.

Excuse me then, Mr. Greville, that I give orders, as if you were not here. Sir Charles rang. Up came

one of his servants—Is the chariot ready?—Almost ready, was the answer.—Make haste. Saunders may see his friends in this neighbourhood: he may stay with them till Monday. Frederick and you attend me.

He took out a letter, and read in it, as he walked about the room, with great composure, not regarding Mr. Greville, who stood swelling, as he owned, at one of the windows, till the servant withdrew; and then he addressed himself to Sir Charles in language of reproach on this contemptuous treatment—Mr. Greville, said Sir Charles, you may be thankful, perhaps, that you are in my own apartment: this intrusion is a very ungentlemanly one.

Sir Charles was angry, and expressed impatience to be gone. Mr. Greville owned, that he knew not how to contain himself, to see his rival, with so many advantages in his person and air, dressed avowedly to attend the woman he had so long—Shall I say been troublesome to? For I am sure he never had the shadow of countenance from me.

I repeat my demand, Sir Charles, of a conference of five minutes below.

You have no right to make any demand upon me, Mr. Greville: if you think you have, the evening will be time enough. But, even then, you must behave more like a gentleman, than you have done hitherto, to intitle yourself to be considered as on a foot with me.

Not on a foot with you, Sir!—And he put his hand upon his sword. A gentleman is on a foot with a prince, Sir, in a point of honour—

Go, then, and find out your prince, Mr. Greville: I am no prince: and you have as much reason to address yourself to the man you never saw, as to me.

His servant just then shewing himself, and withdrawing; Mr. Greville, added he, I leave you in

possession of this apartment. Your servant, Sir. In the evening I shall be at your command.

One word with you, Sir Charles—One word—

What would Mr. Greville? turning back.

Have you made proposals? Are your proposals accepted?

I repeat, that you ought to have behaved differently, Mr. Greville, to be intitled to an answer to these questions.

Answer me, however, Sir: I beg it as a favour.

Sir Charles took out his watch.—After nine: I shall make them wait. But thus I answer you: I *have* made proposals; and, as I told you before, hope they will be accepted.

Were you any other man in the world, Sir, the man before you might question your success with a woman whose difficulties are augmented by the obsequiousness of her admirers. But such a man as you, would not have come down on a fool's errand. I love Miss Byron to distraction. I could not shew my face in the county, and suffer any man out of it to carry away such a prize.

Out of the county, Mr. Greville? What narrowness is this? But I pity you for your love of Miss Byron: and—

You *pity* me, Sir! interrupted he.—I bear not such haughty tokens of superiority. Either give up your pretensions to Miss Byron, or make me sensible of it, in the way of a gentleman.

Mr. Greville, your servant: and he went down.

The wretch followed him; and when they came to the yard, and Sir Charles was stepping into his chariot, he took his hand, several persons present—We are observed, Sir Charles, whispered he. Withdraw with me, for a few moments. By the great God of Heaven, you must not refuse me. I cannot bear that

you should go thus triumphantly on the business you are going upon.

Sir Charles suffered himself to be led by the wretch: and when they were come to a private spot, Mr. Greville drew, and demanded Sir Charles to do the like, putting himself in a posture of defence.

Sir Charles put his hand on his sword, but drew it not. Mr. Greville, said he, know your own safety; and was turning from him, when the wretch swore he would admit of no alternative, but his giving up his pretensions to Miss Byron.

His rage, as Mr. Fenwick describes it from himself, making him dangerous, Sir Charles drew.—I only defend myself, said he—Greville, you keep no guard—He put by his pass with his sword; and, without making a push, closed in with him; twisted his sword out of his hand; and, pointing his own to his breast, You see my power, Sir—Take your life, and your sword.—But if you are either wise, or would be thought a man of honour, tempt not again your fate.

And am I again master of my sword, and unhurt? 'Tis generous—The evening, you say?

Still I say, I will be yours in the evening, either at your own house, or at my inn; but not as a duellist, Sir: you know my principles.

How can this be? and he swore.—How was it done?—Expose me not at Selby-house.—How the devil could this be?—I expect you in the evening here.

He went off a back-way. Sir Charles, instead of going directly into his chariot, went up to his apartment; wrote his billet to my aunt to excuse himself, finding it full late to get hither in time, and being somewhat discomposed in his temper, as he owned to

us: and then he took an airing in his chariot, till he came hither to dine.

But how should we have been alarmed, had we known that Sir Charles declined supping here, in order to meet the violent man again at his inn! And how did we again blame ourselves for taking amiss his not supping with us!

Mr. Fenwick says, that Mr. Greville got *him* to accompany him to the George.

Sir Charles apologized, with great civility, to Mr. Greville, for making him wait for him. Mr. Greville, *had* he been disposed for mischief, had no use of his right-arm. It was strained by the twisting of his sword from it, and in a sling.

Sir Charles behaved to them both with great politeness; and Mr. Greville owned, that he had acted nobly by him, in returning his sword, even before his passion was calmed, and in not using his own. But it was some time, it seems, before he was brought into this temper. What a good deal contributed to it, was, Sir Charles's acquainting him, that he had not given particulars at Selby-house, or to any-body, of the affray between them; but referred it to himself to give them, as he should think proper. This forbearance he highly applauded, and was even thankful for it. Fenwick shall, in confidence, said he, report this matter to your honour, and my own mortification, as the truth requires, at Selby-house. Let me not be hated by Miss Byron, on this account. My passion gave me disadvantage. I will try to honour you, Sir Charles: but I must hate you, if you succeed. One condition, however, I make: that you reconcile me to the Selbys, and Miss Byron; and if you are likely to be successful, let me have the credit of reporting, that it is by my consent.

They parted with civility; but not, it seems, till

a late hour. Sir Charles, as Mr. Beauchamp and Dr. Bartlett have told us, was always happy in making by his equanimity, generosity, and forgivingness, fast friends of inveterate enemies. Thank God, the issue was not unhappy.

Mr. Fenwick says, that the rencounter is very little guessed at, or talked of [Thank God for that, too!]; and to those few, who have enquired of Mr. Greville or Mr. Fenwick about it, it has been denied; and, now Greville, as Mr. Fenwick had done before, declares he will give out, that he yields up all his hopes of Miss Byron; but says, that Sir Charles Grandison, of whose address every-body already talks, is the only man in England to whom he could resign his pretensions.

He insists upon Sir Charles's dining with him to-morrow; Mr. Fenwick's also. Sir Charles is so desirous that the neighbourhood should conclude, that he and these gentlemen are on a foot of good understanding, that he made the less scruple, for every one's sake, to accept of his invitation.

I am very, very thankful, my dearest Lady G. that the constant blusterings of this violent man, for so many months past, are so happily overblown.

Mr. Fenwick, as I guessed he would, made proposals to my aunt and me for my Lucy. Lucy has a fine fortune: but if she had not, he should not have her: indeed he is not worthy of Lucy's mind. He must be related to *me*, he said: but I answered, No man must call Lucy Selby his, who can have any other motive for his wishes but her merit.

We hourly expect your brother. The new danger he has been in on my account, endears him still more to us all. How, how will you forbear, said my uncle, throwing yourself into his arms at once, when he demands the result of our deliberations? If I follow Mr. Deane's advice, I am to give him my hand

at the *first* word: if Lucy's and Nancy's, he is not to ask me *twice*: if my grandmamma's and aunt's [they are always good] I am to act as occasion requires, and as my own confided-in prudence will suggest at the time; but to be sure not to be guilty of affectation. But still, my dear ladies, something sticks with me (and ought it not?) in relation to the noble Clementina!

LETTER XXII.

MISS BYRON. IN CONTINUATION.

Saturday night, October 14.

Now, my dear ladies, let me lay before you, just as it happened, for your approbation, or censure, all that has passed between the best of men and your Harriet. Happy shall I be, if I can be acquitted by his sisters.

My grandmamma went home last night, but was here before Sir Charles; yet he came a little after eleven.

He addressed us severally, and my grandmother, particularly, with such an air of reverence, as did himself credit, because of her years and wisdom.

We all congratulated him on what we had heard from Mr. Fenwick.

Mr. Greville and I, said he, are on very good terms. When I have the presumption to think *myself* a welcome guest, I am to introduce him as my friend. Mr. Greville, though so long your neighbour, modestly doubts his own welcome.

Well he may, said my aunt Selby, after—No *afters*, dear madam, if you mean any-thing that has passed between him and me.

He again addressed himself to me. I rejoice, Sir, said I, that you have so happily quieted a spirit always thought uncontroulable.

You must tell me, madam, replied he, when I can be allowed to introduce Mr. Greville to you?

Shall I answer for my cousin? said Lucy.—I did not, Sir Charles, think you such a designer.—You were not, you know, to introduce Mr. Greville, till you were assured of being yourself a *very* welcome guest to my cousin.

I own my plot, replied he: I had an intent to surprise Miss Byron into an implied favour to myself.

You need not, Sir Charles, thought I, take such a method.

On his taking very kind notice of my cousin James; Do you know, Sir Charles, said my uncle (whose joy, when it overflows, seldom suffers the dear man to consult seasonableness) that that boy is already in love with your Emily?—The youth blushed—

I am obliged to every-body who loves my Emily. She is a favourite of Miss Byron—Must she not then be a good girl!

She is indeed a favourite, said I; and so great a one, that I know not *who* can deserve her.

I said this, lest Sir Charles should think (on a supposition that my uncle meant something) that my cousin had *my* countenance.

Sir Charles then addressed himself to my grandmamma and aunt, speaking low—I hope, ladies, I may be allowed in your presence to resume the conversation of yesterday with Miss Byron?

No, Sir Charles, answered my grandmamma, affecting to look serious, that must not be.

Must not be, madam! and he seemed surprised, and *affected* too. My aunt was a little startled; but not so much as she would have been, had she not known the lively turns which that excellent parent sometimes gives to subjects of conversation.

Must not be, I repeat, Sir Charles: but I will not suffer you to be long in suspense. We have always, when proposals of this kind have been made, referred ourselves to our Harriet. She has prudence: she has gratitude. We will leave her and you together, when she is inclined to hear you on the interesting subject. I know I am right. Harriet is above disguises. She will be obliged to speak for herself, when she has not either her aunt or me to refer to. She and you are not acquaintance of yesterday. You, Sir, I dare say, will not be displeased with the opportunity—

Neither Miss Byron nor I, madam, could wish for the absence of two such parental relations. But this reference I will presume to construe as a hopeful prognostic. May I *now*, through your mediation, madam (*to my aunt*) hope for the opportunity of addressing myself to Miss Byron?

My aunt, taking me to the window, told me what had passed. I was a little surprised at my grandmamma's reference to myself only. I expostulated with my aunt: It is plain, madam, that Sir Charles expected not this compliment.

Your grandmamma's motion surprised me a little, my dear: it proceeded from the fulness of her joy: she meant a compliment to you both: there is now no receding. Let us withdraw together.

What, madam, at *his* proposal? As if *expecting* to be followed?—See how my uncle looks at me! Every one's eyes are upon me!—In the afternoon, if it must be—as by accident. But I had rather you and my grandmamma were to be present. I mean not to be guilty of affectation to him: I know my own heart, and will not disguise it. I shall *want* to refer to you. I shall be silly: I dare not trust myself.

I wish the compliment had not been made, replied my aunt. But, my dear, come with me.

She went out. I followed her; a little reluctantly,

however; and Lucy tells me, that I looked so silly, as was enough, of itself, to inform every-body of the intent of my withdrawing, and that I expected Sir Charles would follow me.

She was very cruel, I told her; and in my case would have looked as silly as I; while *I* should have pitied *her*.

I led to my closet. My aunt, seating me there, was going from me. Well, madam, and so I am to stay here quietly, I suppose, till Sir Charles vouchsafes to come? Would Clementina have done so?

No hint to him of Clementina in this way, I charge you: it would look ungrateful, and girlish. I will introduce him to you—

And stay with me, I hope, madam, when he is introduced. I tell you, Lady G. all my foibles.

Away went my aunt; but soon returned, and with her the man of men.

She but entered, and saw him take my hand, which he did with a compliment that would have made me proud at another time, and left us together.

I was resolved then to assume all my courage, and, if possible, to be present to myself. He *was* to himself; yet had a modesty and politeness in his manner, which softened the dignity of his address.

Some men, I fancy, would have begun with admiring, or pretending to admire, the pieces of my own workmanship, which you have seen hang there: but not he. After another compliment made (as I presume, to re-assure me) on my restored complexion [I did indeed feel my face glow] he spoke directly to his subject.

I need not, I am sure, said he, repeat to my dear Miss Byron what I said yesterday, as to the delicacy of my situation, with regard to what some would deem a divided or double love. I need not repeat to you

the very great regard I have, and ever shall have, for the lady abroad. Her merit, and your greatness of mind, render any apology for so just a regard needless. But it may be necessary to say, what I can with truth say, that I love not my own soul better than I love Miss Byron. You see, madam, I am wholly free, with regard to that lady—free by her own choice, by her own will.—You see, that the whole family build a part of their happiness on the success of my address to a lady of my own country. Clementina's wish always was, that I would marry; and only be careful, that my choice should not disgrace the regard she vouchsafed to own for me. Clementina, when she has the pleasure of knowing the dear lady before me, if that *may* be, by the name of Grandison, will confess, that my choice has done the highest credit to the favour she honoured me with.

And will you not, my dear Lady G. be ready to ask, Could Sir Charles Grandison be really in earnest in this humble court (as if he doubted her favour) to a creature, every wish of whose heart was devoted to him? Did he not rather for his own sake, in order to give her the consequence which a wife of his ought to have, resolve to dignify the poor girl, who had so long been mortified by cruel suspense, and who had so often despaired of ever being happy with the lord of her heart? O no, my dear, your brother *looked* the humble, the modest lover; yet the man of sense, of dignity, in love. I could not but be assured of his affection, notwithstanding all that had passed: and what *had* passed, that he could possibly have helped? —His pleas of the day before, the contents of Signor Jeronymo's letter, were all in my mind.

He seemed to expect my answer. He only, whose generously *doubting* eye kept down mine, can tell how I looked, how I behaved—But hesitatingly,

tremblingly, both voice, and knees, as I sat; thus brokenly, as near as I remember, I answered, not withdrawing my hand, though, as I spoke, he more than once pressed it with his lips:—The honour of Sir Charles Grandison—Sir Charles Grandison's honour—no one ever did, or ever can, doubt.—I must own—I must confess—There I paused.

What does my dear Miss Byron own?—What confess?—Assure yourself, madam, of my honour, of my gratitude.—Should you have *doubts*, speak them. I desire your favour but as I clear up your doubts. I *would* speak them for you.—I *have* spoken them for you. I own to you, madam, that there may be force in your doubts, which nothing but your generosity, and affiance in my honour, can induce you to get over. And thus far I will own against myself, that were the lady in whose heart I should hope an interest, to have been circumstanced as I was, my own delicacy would have been hurt: owing, indeed, to the high notion I have of the true female delicacy.—Now say, now *own*, now *confess*, my dear Miss Byron—what you were going to *confess*.

This, Sir, is my confession—and it is the confession of a heart which I hope is as sincere as your own—That I am dazzled, confounded, shall I say? at the superior merits of the lady you so nobly, so like yourself, glory still in esteeming as she well deserves to be esteemed.

Joy seemed to flash from his eyes—He bowed and kissed my hand; but was either silent by choice, or could not speak.

I proceeded, though with a hesitating voice, a glowing cheek, and downcast eyes—I fear not, Sir, any more than *she* did, your honour, your justice, no nor your indulgent tenderness—*Your* character, *your* principles, Sir, are full security to the woman

who shall endeavour to deserve from you that indulgence—But so justly high do I think of Lady Clementina, and her conduct, that I fear—ah, Sir, I fear—that it is impossible—

I stopt—I am sure I was in earnest, and must *look* to be so, or my countenance and my heart were not allied.

What *impossible!*—What fears my dear Miss Byron is *impossible?*

Why (thus kindly urged, and by a man of unquestionable honour) shall I not speak all that is in my mind? The poor Harriet Byron fears, she *justly* fears, when she contemplates the magnanimity of that exalted lady, that with all her care, with all her endeavours, she never shall be able to make the figure to HERSELF, which is necessary for her own tranquillity (however *you* might generously endeavour to *assure* her doubting mind). This, Sir, is my doubt —And—*all* my doubt.

Generous, kind, noble Miss Byron! in a rapturous accent—And is this *all* your doubt? Then must yet the man before you be a happy man; for he questions not, if life be lent him, to make you one of the happiest of women. Clementina has acted gloriously in preferring to all other considerations her religion and her country; I can allow this in her favour, against myself: and shall I not be doubly bound in gratitude to her sister excellence, who, having not those trials, yet the most delicate of human minds, shews in my favour a frankness of heart which sets her above little forms and affectation, and, at the same time, a generosity with regard to the merits of another lady which has few examples?

He then on one knee, taking my passive hand between both his, and kissing it, once, twice, thrice—Repeat, dear, and ever-dear, Miss Byron, that this is

all your doubt [I bowed assentingly: I could not speak]—A happy, an easy task, is mine! Be assured, dearest madam, that I will disavow every action of my life, every thought of my heart, every word of my mouth, which tends not to dissipate that doubt.

I took out my handkerchief.—

My dear Miss Byron, proceeded he, with an ardour that spoke his heart, you are goodness itself. I approached you with diffidence, with *more* than diffidence, with apprehension, because of your known delicacy; which I was afraid, on this occasion, would *descend* into punctiliousness.—May blessings attend my future life, as my grateful heart shall acknowledge this goodness!—

Again he kissed my hand, rising with dignity. I could have received his vows on my knees; but I was motionless; yet, how was I delighted to be the cause of joy to him!—Joy to your brother! to Sir Charles Grandison!

He saw me greatly affected, and indeed my emotion increased on reflection. He considerately said, I will leave you, my dear Miss Byron, to intitle myself to the congratulations of all our friends below. From this moment, after a thousand suspenses, and strange events, which, unsought-for, have chequered my past life, I date my happiness.

He most respectfully left me.

I was glad he did: yet my eyes followed him. His very shadow was grateful to me, as he went down stairs. And there, it seems, he congratulated himself, and called for the congratulations of every one present, in so *noble* a manner, that every eye ran over with joy.

Was I not right, said my grandmamma to my aunt (you half-blamed me, my dear) in leaving Sir Charles and my Harriet together? Harriet ever was

above disguise. Sir Charles might have *guessed* at her heart; but he would not have *known* it from her own lips, had she had you and me to refer to.

Whatever *you* do, madam, answered my aunt, must be right.

My aunt came up to me. She found me in a very thoughtful mood. I had sometimes been accusing myself of forwardness, and at others was acquitting myself, or endeavouring to do so—yet mingling, though thus early, a hundred delightful circumstances with my accusations and acquittals, which were likely to bless my future lot: such as, his relations and friends being mine, mine his; and I ran them over all by name. But my Emily, my dear Emily! I considered as *my* ward, as well as his. In this way my aunt found me. She embraced me, applauded me, and cleared up all my self-doubtings, as to forwardness; and told me of their mutual congratulations below, and how happy I had made them all. What self-confidence did her approbation give me!—And as she assured me, that my uncle would not railly, but extol me, I went down, with spirits much higher than I went up with.

Sir Charles and my grandmamma were talking together, sitting side by side, when I entered the room. All the company stood up at my entrance.—O my dear! what a princess in every one's eye will the declared love of such a man make me! How will all the consequence I had before, among my partial friends and favourers, be augmented!

My uncle said, *sideling* by me (kindly intending not to dash me) My sweet sparkler! [That was the name he used to call me, before Sir Charles Grandison taught me a lesson that made me thoughtful] You are now again my delight, and my joy. I thank you for not being—a fool—that's all. Egad, I was afraid of your *femality*, when you came face to face.

Sir Charles came to me, and, with an air of the most respectful love, taking my hand, led me to a seat between himself and my grandmamma.

My ever dear Harriet, said she, and condescended to lift my hand to her lips, I will not abash you; but must just say, that you have acquitted yourself as I wished you to do. I knew I could trust to a heart that ever was above affectation or disguise.

Sir Charles Grandison, madam, said I, has the generosity to distinguish and encourage a doubting mind.

Infinitely obliging Miss Byron, replied he, pressing one hand between both his, your condescension attracts both my love and reverence. Permit me to say, that had not Heaven given a Miss Byron for the object of my hope, I had hardly, after what had befallen me *abroad*, ever looked forward to a wedded love.

One favour I have to beg of you, Sir, resumed my grandmamma: it is, that you will never use the word *abroad*, or express *persons* by their *countries*; in fine, that you will never speak with reserve, when the admirable Clementina is in your thoughts. Mention her name with freedom, my dear Sir, to my child, to me, and to my daughter Selby—you may—We always loved and reverenced her. She has given an example to all her sex, of a passion properly subdued—Of temporal considerations yielding to eternal!

I, Sir, said I, join in this request.

His eyes spoke his grateful joy. He bowed low to each.

My aunt came to us, and sat down by Sir Charles, refusing his seat, because it was next me. Let me, said she, enjoy your conversation: I have heard part of your subject, and subscribe to it, with all my heart. Lady G. can testify for us all three, that we cannot be so mean, as to intend you a compliment, Sir, by what has been said.

Nor can I, madam, as to imagine it. You exalt *yourselves* even more than you do Clementina. I will let my Jeronymo know some of the particulars which have given joy to *my* heart. They will make *him* happy; and the excellent Clementina (I will *not* forbear her name) will rejoice in the happy prospects before me. She wanted but to be assured that the friend she so greatly honoured with her regard, was not likely (either in the qualities of the lady's mind, or in her family-connexions) to be a sufferer by her declining his address.

May nothing now happen, my dear Lady G. to overcloud—But I will not be apprehensive. I will thankfully enjoy the present moment, and leave the future to the All-wise Disposer of events. If Sir Charles Grandison be mine, and reward by his kindness my love, what can befall me, that I ought not to bear with resignation?

But, my dear ladies, let me here ask you a question, or two.

Tell me, Did I ever, as you remember, suffer by suspenses, by *any*-thing?—Was there ever really such a man as Sir Hargrave Pollexfen?—Did I not tell you my *dreams*, when I told you of what I believed I had undergone from his persecuting insults? It is well for the sake of preserving to me the grace of humility, and for the sake of warning (for all my days *preceding* that insult had been happy) that I wrote down *at the time* an account of those sufferings, those suspenses, or I should have been apt to forget now, that I ever was unhappy.

And, pray, let me ask, ladies, Can you guess what is become of my illness? I was very ill, you know, when you, Lady G. did us the honour of a visit; so ill, that I could not hide it from you, and my other dear friends, as fain I would have done. I did not think it was an illness of such a nature, as that its

cure depended on an easy heart. I was so much convinced of the merits of Lady Clementina, and that no other woman in the world ought to be Lady Grandison, that I thought I had pretty tolerably quieted my heart in that expectation. I hope I brag not too soon. But, my dear, I now feel so easy, so light, so happy—that I hardly know what's the matter with me—But I hope nobody will *find* the malady I have *lost*. May no disappointed heart be invaded by it! Let it not travel to Italy! The dear lady there has suffered enough from a worse malady: nor, if it stay in the island, let it come near the sighing heart of my Emily! That dear girl shall be happy, if it be in my power to make her so. Pray, ladies, tell her she shall. No, but don't: I will tell her so myself by the next post. Nor let it, I pray God, attack Lady Anne S. or any of the half-score ladies, of whom I was once so unwilling to hear.

* *

Our discourse at table was on various subjects. My cousin James was again very inquisitive after the principal courts, and places of note, in Italy.

What pleasure do I hope one day to receive from the perusal (if I shall be favoured with it) of Sir Charles's LITERARY JOURNAL, mentioned to Dr. Bartlett, in some of his letters from Italy! For it includes, I presume, a description of palaces, cities, cabinets of the curious, diversions, amusements, customs, of different nations. How attentive were we all, to the answers he made to my cousin James's questions! My memory serves but for a few generals; and those I will not trouble you with. Sir Charles told my cousin, that if he were determined on an excursion abroad, he would furnish him with recommendatory letters.

Mr. Greville and his insult were one of our sub-

jects after dinner, when the servants were withdrawn. Lucy expressed her wonder, that he was so soon reconciled to Sir Charles, after the menaces he had for years past thrown out against any man who should be likely to succeed with me.

My uncle observed, that Mr. Greville had not for a long time had any hopes; that he always was apprehensive, that if Sir Charles Grandison were to make his addresses, he would succeed: that it had been his and Fenwick's custom, to endeavour to bluster away their competitors*. He possibly, my uncle added, might hope to intimidate Sir Charles; or at least, knowing his principles, might suppose he ran no risque in the attempt.

Mr. Deane said, Mr. Greville had told him, that the moment he knew Miss Byron had chosen her man, he would give up his pretensions; but that, as long as she remained single, he was determined to persecute her, as he himself called it. Perseverance he had known do every-thing, after an admired woman had run through her circle of humble servants, and perhaps found herself disappointed in her own choice; and for his part, but with *her*, he had no fondness for the married life; he cared not who knew it.

Sir Charles spoke of Mr. Greville with candour. He thought him a man of rough manners, but not ill-natured. He affected to be a joker, and often therefore might be taken for a worse man than he really was. He believed him to be careless of his reputation, and one who seemed to think there was wit and bravery in advancing free and uncommon things; and gloried in bold surprises. For my part, continued he, I should hardly have consented to cultivate his acquaintance, much less to dine with

* See Vol. I. Letter ii.

him to-morrow, but as he insisted upon it, as a token of my forgiving in him a behaviour that was really what a gentleman should not have pardoned himself for. I considered him, proceeded Sir Charles, as a neighbour to this family, with whom you had lived, and perhaps chose to live, upon good terms. Bad neighbours are nuisances, especially if they are people of fortune: it is in the power of such to be very troublesome in their own *persons*; and they will often let loose their *servants* to defy, provoke, insult, and do mischief to those they love not. Mr. Greville I thought, added he, deserved to be the more indulged, for the sake of his love to Miss Byron. He is a proud man, and must be mortified enough in having it generally known that she had constantly rejected his suit.

Why that's true, said my uncle. Sir Charles, you consider every-body. But I hope all's over between you—

I have no doubt but it is, Mr. Selby. Mr. Greville's whole aim now, seems to be, to come off with as little abatement of his pride, as possible. He thinks, if he can pass to the world as one who, having no hope himself, is desirous to promote the cause of his friend, as he will acknowledge me to be, it will give him consequence in the eye of the world, and be a gentle method of letting his pride down easy.

Very well, said my uncle; and a very good contrivance for a proud man, I think.

It is an expedient of his friend Fenwick, replied Sir Charles; and Mr. Greville is not a little fond of it. And what, ladies and gentlemen, will you say, if you should see me come to church to-morrow with him, sit with him in the same pew, and go with him to dinner in his coach! It is his request that I will. He thinks this will put an end to the whispers which have passed, in spite of all his precaution, of

a rencounter between him and me: for he has given out, that he strained his wrist and arm by a fall from his horse. Tell me, dear ladies, shall I, or shall I not, oblige him in this request? He is to be with me to-night, for an answer.

My grandmamma said, that Mr. Greville was always a very odd, a very particular man. She thought Sir Charles very kind to us in being so willing to conciliate with him. My uncle declared, that he was very desirous to live on good terms with all his neighbours, particularly with Mr. Greville, a part of whose estate being intermixed with his, it might be in his power to be vexatious, at least to his tenants. Mr. Deane thought the compromise was a happy one; and he supposed entirely agreeable to Sir Charles's generous wishes to promote the good understanding of neighbours; and to the compassion it was in his nature to shew to an unsuccessful rival.

Sir Charles then turning to Lucy; May I, Miss Selby, said he, do you think, without being too deep a *designer*, ask leave of Miss Byron, on the presumption of her goodness to me, to bring Mr. Greville to drink tea with her to-morrow in the afternoon?

Your servant, Sir Charles, answered Lucy, smiling. But what say you, cousin Byron, to this question?

This house is not mine, replied I; but I dare say, I may be allowed the liberty, in the names of my uncle and aunt, to answer, that any person will be welcome to Selby-house, whom Sir Charles Grandison shall think proper to bring with him.

Mr. Greville, said Sir Charles, professes himself unable to see any of you (Miss Byron, in particular) without an introductor. He makes a high compliment to me, when he supposes me to be a proper one. If you give me leave, bowing to my uncle and

aunt, I will answer him to his wishes; and hope, when he comes, every-thing will be passed by in silence that has happened between him and me.

Two or three lively things passed between Lucy and Sir Charles, on his repetition of her word *designer*. She began with advantage, but did not hold it; yet he gave her consequence in the little debate, at his own expence, as he seemed to intend.

My grandmamma will go to her own church; but will be here at dinner, and the rest of the day. I have a thousand things more to say, all agreeable; but it is now late, and a drowsy fit has come upon me. I will welcome it. Adieu, adieu, my dear ladies! Felicitate, I am sure you will,

Your ever-obliged, ever-devoted,

HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER XXIII.

MISS BYRON. IN CONTINUATION.

Sunday noon, October 15.

WE were told, there would be a crowded church this morning, in expectation of seeing the new humble servant of Miss Byron attending her thither: for it is every-where known, that Sir Charles Grandison is come down to make his addresses to the young creature who is happy in every one's love and good wishes; and all is now said to have been settled between him and us, by his noble sister, and Lord G. and Dr. Bartlett, when they were with us. You see what credit you did us by your kind visit, my dear.—And we are to be married—O my dear Lady G.! you cannot imagine how soon.

Many of the neighbourhood seemed disappointed,

when they saw me led in by my uncle, as Mr. Deane led my aunt, and Nancy and Lucy only attended by their brother. But it was not long before Mr. Greville, Mr. Fenwick, and Sir Charles, entered, and went into the pew of the former; which is over against ours. Mr. Greville and Mr. Fenwick bowed low to us, severally, the moment they went into the pew, and to several others of the gentry.

Sir Charles had first other devoirs to pay: to false shame, you have said, he was always superior. I was delighted to see the example he set. He paid us his second compliments. I felt my face glow, on the whispering that went round. I thought I read in every eye, admiration of him, even through the sticks of some of the ladies' fans.

What a difference was there between the two men and him, in their behaviour, throughout both the service, and sermon! Yet who ever beheld two of the three so decent, so attentive, so *reverent*, I may say, before? Were all who call themselves gentlemen, (thought I, more than once) like *this*, the world would yet be a good world.

Mr. Greville had his arm in a sling. He seemed highly delighted with his guest; so did Mr. Fenwick. When the sermon was ended, Mr. Greville held the pew-door ready opened, to attend our movements; and when we were in motion to go, he taking officiously Sir Charles's hand, bent towards us. Sir Charles met us at our pew-door, and offered, with a profound respect, his hand to me.

This was equal to a public declaration. It took every-body's attention. He is not ashamed to avow in public, what he thinks fit to own in private.

I was humbled more than exalted by the general notice. Mr. Greville (bold, yet low man!) made a motion, as if he gave the hand that Sir Charles took, and, not speaking low (subtle as a serpent!)

My plaguy horse, said he, to my aunt, looking at his sling, knew not his master. I invite myself to tea with you, madam, in the afternoon. You will supply my lame arm, I hope, yourself.

There is no such thing as keeping private one's movements in a country-town, if one would. One of our servants reported the general approbation. It is a pleasure, surely, my dear ladies, to be addressed to by a man of whom every one approves. What a poor figure must she make, who gives way to a courtship from a man generally deemed unworthy of her! Such women indeed usually confess indirectly the folly, by carrying on the affair clandestinely.

Sunday evening.

O my dear! I have been strangely disconcerted by means of Mr. Greville. He is a strange man. But I will lead to it in course.

We all went to church again in the afternoon. Every-body who knew Mr. Greville, took it for a high piece of politeness in him to his guest, that he came twice the same day to church. Sir Charles edified every-body by his cheerful piety. Are you not of opinion, my dear Lady G. that wickedness may be always put out of countenance by a person who has an established character for goodness, and who is not ashamed of doing his duty in the public eye? Methinks I could wish that all the profligates in the parish had their seats around that of a man who has fortitude enough to dare to be good. The text was a happy one to this purpose: the words of our Saviour: 'Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels.'

Sir Charles led my aunt to her coach, as Mr. Greville officiously, but properly for his views, did me. We found Mr. Fenwick at Selby-house talking to my grandmamma on the new subject. She dined with us; but, not being very well, chose to retire to her devotions in my closet, while we went to church, she having been at her own in the morning.

We all received Mr. Greville with civility. He affects to be thought a wit, you know, and a great joker. Some men cannot appear to advantage without making their friend a butt to shoot at. Fenwick and he tried to play upon each other, as usual. Sir Charles lent each his smile; and, whatever he thought of them, shewed not a contempt of their great-boy snip-snap. But, at last, my grandmamma and aunt engaged Sir Charles in a conversation, which made the gentlemen so silent, and so attentive, that had they not flashed a good deal at each other before, one might have thought them a little discreet.

Nobody took the least notice of what had passed between Mr. Greville and Sir Charles, till Mr. Greville touched upon the subject to me. He desired an audience of ten minutes, as he said; and, upon his declaration, that it was the last he would ever ask of me on the subject; and upon my grandmamma's saying, Oblige Mr. Greville, my dear; I permitted him to draw me to the window.

His address was nearly in the following words; not speaking so low, but every one might hear him, though he said aloud, nobody must but me.

I must account myself very unhappy, madam, in having never been able to incline you to shew me favour. You may think me vain: I believe I am so: but I may take to myself the advantages and qualities which every-body allows me. I have an estate that will warrant my addresses to a woman of the first rank; and it is free, and unincumbered. I am not

an ill-natured man. I love my jest, 'tis true; but I love my friend. You good women generally do not like a man the less for having something to mend in him. I could say a great deal more in my own behalf, but that Sir Charles Grandison (looking at him) quite eclipses me. Devil fetch me, if I can tell how to think myself *any*-thing before him. I was always afraid of him. But when I heard he was gone abroad, in pursuit of a former love, I thought I had another chance for it.

Yet I was half-afraid of Lord D. His mother would manage a Machiavel. He has a great estate; a title; he has good qualities for a nobleman. But when I found that you could so steadily refuse him, as well as me; There must be some man, thought I, who is lord of her heart. *Fenwick* is as sad a dog as I; it cannot be he. *Orme*, poor soul! she will not have such a milk-sop as that, neither—

Mr. Orme, Sir, interrupted I, and was going to praise him—But he said, I will be heard out now: this is my dying speech; I will not be interrupted.

Well then, Sir, smiling, come to your last words, as soon as you can.

I have told you, before now, Miss Byron, that I will not bear your smiles: but now, smiles or frowns, I care not. I have no hopes left; and I am resolved to abuse you, before I have done.

Abuse me!—I hope not, Sir.

'Hope not!' What signify *your* hopes, who never gave me any? But hear me out. I shall say some things that will displease you; but more of another nature.—I went on guessing who could be the happy man—That *second* Orme, Fowler, cannot be he, thought I. Is it the newly-arrived Beauchamp? He is a pretty fellow enough [I had all your footsteps watched, as I told you I would]. No, answered I myself, she refused Lord D. and a whole

tribe of us, before Beauchamp came to England—Who the devil can he be?—But when I heard that the dangerous man, whom I had thought gone abroad to his matrimonial destiny, was returned, unmarried; when I heard that he was actually coming northward; I began to be again afraid of him.

Last Thursday night I had intelligence, that he was seen at Dunstable in the morning, in his way towards us. Then did my heart fail me. I had my spies about Selby-house: I own it. What will not love and jealousy make a man do? I understood that your uncle and Mr. Deane, and a tribe of servants for train-sake, were set out to meet him. How I raved! How I cursed! How I swore!—They will not surely, thought I, allow my rival, at his *first* visit, to take up his residence under the same roof with this charming witch!

Witch! Mr. Greville—

Witch! Yes, witch!—I called you ten thousand names, in my rage, all as bad as that. Here, Jack, Will, Tom, George, get ready instantly each a dozen firebrands! I will light up Selby-house for a bonfire, to welcome the arrival of the invader of my freehold! And prongs and pitchforks shall be got ready to push every soul of the family back into the flames, that not one of it may escape my vengeance—

Horrid man! I will hear no more.

You must! You shall! It is my dying speech, I tell you.—

A dying man should be penitent.

To what purpose?—I can have no hope. What is to be expected *for* or *from* a despairing man?—But then I had intelligence brought me, that my rival was not admitted to take up his abode with you. This saved Selby-house. All my malice then was against the George at Northampton. The

keeper of it owes, said I to myself, a hundred thousand obligations to me; yet to afford a retirement to my deadliest foe!—But 'tis more manly, thought I, in person, to call this invader to account, if he pretends an interest at Selby-house; and to force him to relinquish his pretensions to the queen of it; as I had made more than one gallant fellow do before, by dint of bluster.

I slept not all that night. In the morning I made my visit at the inn. I pretend to know as well as any man, what belongs to civility and good manners; but I knew the character of the man I had to deal with: I knew he was cool, yet resolute. My rage would not let me be civil; and if it would, I knew, I must be rude to provoke him. I *was* rude. I was peremptory.

Never were there such cold, such phlegmatic contempts, passed upon man, as he passed upon me. I came to a point with him. I heard he would not fight: I was resolved he should. I followed him to his chariot. I got him to a private place; but I had the devil, and no man, to deal with. He cautioned me, by way of insult, as I took it, to keep a guard. I took his hint. I had better not; for he knew all the tricks of the weapon. He was in with me in a moment. I had no sword left me, and my life was at the mercy of his. He gave me up my own sword —Cautioned me to regard my safety—Put up his; withdrew.—I found myself sensible of a damnable strain. I had no right arm. I slunk away like a thief. He mounted his triumphal car; and pursued his course to the lady of Selby-house. I went home, cursed, swore, fell down, and bit the earth.

My uncle looked impatient: Sir Charles seemed in suspense, but attentive. Mr. Greville proceeded.

I got Fenwick to go with me, to attend him at night, by appointment. Cripple as I was, I would

have provoked him: he would not be provoked: and when I found that he had not exposed me at Selby-house; when I remembered that I owed my sword and my life to his moderation; when I recollected his character; what he had done by Sir Hargrave Pollexfen; what Bagenhall had told me of him; why the plague, thought I, should I (hopeless as I am of succeeding with my charming Byron, whether *he* lives or dies) set my face against such a man? He is incapable either of insult or arrogance: let me (Fenwick advised a scheme; let me) make him my friend to save my pride, and the devil take the rest, Harriet Byron, and all—

Wicked man!—You were dying a thousand words ago—I am tired of you—

You have not, madam, heard half my dying words yet—But I would not terrify you—Are you terrified?—

Indeed I am.

Sir Charles motioned as if he would approach us; but kept his place, on my grandmamma's saying, Let us hear his humour out: Mr. Greville was always particular.

Terrified, madam! What is *your* being terrified to the sleepless nights, to the tormenting days, you have given me? Cursing darkness, cursing light, and most myself!—O madam! with shut teeth, what a torment of torments have you been to me!—Well, but now I will hasten to a conclusion, in mercy to you, who, however, never shewed me any—

I never was cruel, Mr. Greville—

But you was; and most cruel, when most sweet-tempered. It was to that smiling obligingness that I owed my ruin! That gave me hope; that radiance of countenance; and that frozen heart!—O you are a dear deceiver! But I hasten to conclude my dying

speech—Give me your hand!—I will have it—*I will not eat it*, as once I had like to have done.—And now, madam, hear my parting words—'You will have the glory of giving to the best of men, the best of wives. Let it not be long before you do; for the sake of many, who will hope on till then. As your *lover*, I must hate him: as your *husband*, I will love him. He will, he must, be kind, affectionate, grateful, to you; and you will deserve all his tenderness. May you live (the ornaments of human nature as you are) to see your children's children; all promising to be as good, as worthy, as happy, as yourselves! And full of years, full of honour, in one hour may you be translated to that Heaven where only you can be more happy than you will be, if you are both as happy as I wish and expect you to be!'

Tears dropt on my cheek, at this unexpected blessing.

He still held my hand—I will not, without your leave, madam—May I, before I part with it?—He looked at me as if for leave to kiss my hand, bowing his head upon it.

My heart was opened. God bless you, Mr. Greville! as you have blessed me.—Be a good man, and He will.—I withdrew not my hand.

He kneeled on one knee; eagerly kissed my hand, more than once. Tears were in his own eyes. He arose, hurried me to Sir Charles, and holding to him my then, through surprise, half-withdrawn hand—Let me have the pride, the glory, Sir Charles Grandison, to quit this dear hand to yours. It is only to yours that I would quit it—*Happy, happy, happy pair!—None but the brave deserves the fair.*—

Sir Charles took my hand—Let this precious present be mine, said he (kissing it) with the declared

assent of every one here; and presented me to my grandmamma and aunt. I was affrighted by the hurry the strange man had put me into—

May I *but* live to see her yours, Sir! said my grandmamma, in a kind of rapture!

The moment he had put my hand into Sir Charles's, he ran out of the room, with the utmost precipitation. He was gone, quite gone, when he came to be enquired after; and every-body was uneasy for him, till we were told, by one of the servants, that he took from the window of the outward parlour, his hat and sword; and by another, that he met him, his servant after him, hurrying away, and even sobbing as he flew.—Was there ever so strange a man?

Don't you pity Mr. Greville, my dear?

Sir Charles was generously uneasy for him.

Mr. Greville, said Lucy (who had always charity for him) has frequently surprised us with his particularities; but I hope, from the last part of his behaviour, that he is not the free-thinking man he sometimes affects to be thought. I flatter myself, that Sir Charles had a righter notion of him than we, in what he said of him yesterday.

Sir Charles waited on my grandmamma home; so we had him not to supper. We are all to dine with her to-morrow. Your brother, you may suppose, will be a principal guest.

Monday morning, October 16.

I have a letter from my Emily; by which I find, she is with you; though she has not dated it. You were very kind in shewing the dear girl the overflowings of my heart in her favour. She is all grateful love, and goodness. I will soon write to her, to repeat my assurances, that my whole power shall always be exerted to do her pleasure: but you

must tell her, as from yourself, that she must have patience. I cannot ask her guardian such a question as she puts, as to her living with me, till I am likely to *succeed.* Would the sweet girl have me make a request to him, that shall shew him I am supposing myself to be his, before I am so? We are not come so far on our journey by several stages. And yet, from what he intimated last night, as he waited on my grandmamma to Shirley-manor, I find, that his expectations are forwarder than it will be possible for me to answer: and I must, without intending the least affectation, for common decorum-sake, take the management of this point upon myself. For, my dear, we are every one of us here so much in love with him, that the moment he should declare his wishes, they would be as ready to urge me to oblige him, were he even to limit me but to two or three days, as if they were afraid he would not repeat his request.

I have a letter from Mr. Beauchamp. He writes, that there are no hopes of Sir Harry's recovery. I am very sorry for it. Mr. Beauchamp does me great honour to write to me to give him consolation. His is a charming letter—So full of filial piety!—Excellent young man! He breathes in it the true spirit of his friend.

Sir Charles and his Beauchamp, and Dr. Bartlett, correspond, I presume, as usual. What would I give to see all Sir Charles writes that relates to us!

Mr. Fenwick just now tells us, that Mr. Greville is not well, and keeps his chamber. He has my cordial wishes for his health. His last behaviour to me appears, the more I think of it, more strange, from such a man. I expected not that he would conclude with such generous wishes.

Nancy, who does not love him, compares him to the wicked prophet of old, blessing where he was

expected to curse*; and says, it was such an over-strain of generosity from him, that it might well over-set him.

Did you think that our meek Nancy could have said so severe a thing? But meekness offended (as she once was by him) has an excellent memory, and can be bitter.

We are preparing now to go to Shirley-manor. Our cousins Patty and Kitty Holles will be there at dinner. They have been for a few weeks past at their aunt's, near Daventry. They are impatient to see Sir Charles. Adieu, my dearest ladies! Continue to love your

HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER XXIV.

MISS BYRON. IN CONTINUATION.

Monday night, October 16.

WE have been very happy this day at my grand-mamma's. Your brother makes himself more and more beloved by all my friends; who yet declare, that they thought they could not have loved him better than they did before. My cousin Holles's say, they could sooner lay open their hearts to him, than to any man they ever saw; yet their freedom would never make them lose sight of their respect.

He told me, that he had breakfasted with Mr. Greville. How does he conciliate the mind of every one to him! He said kind and compassionate things of Mr. Greville; and *so* unaffectedly—I was delighted with him. For, regardful as he would be, and is, of his own honour; no low, narrow jealousy, I dare

* Balaam. Numb. xxii. & seq.

say, will ever have entrance into his heart. *Charity thinketh no evil!* Of what a charming text is that a part*!—What is there equal to it, in any of the writings of the philosophers?

My dear Miss Byron, said he to me, Mr. Greville loves you more than you can possibly imagine. Despairing of success with you, he has assumed airs of bravery; but your name is written in large letters in his heart. He gave me, continued he, the importance of asking my *leave* to love you still.—What *ought* I to have answered?—

What *did* you answer, Sir?

That so far as I might presume to give it, I gave it. Had I the honour, added I, of calling Miss Byron mine, I would not barely *allow* your love of her; I would *demand* it.—Have I not assured you, Mr. Greville, that I look upon you as my *friend?*

You will quite subdue Mr. Greville, Sir, said I. You will, by the generosity of your treatment of him, do more than any-body else ever could—You will mak e him a good man.

Mr. Greville, madam, deserves pity, on more accounts than one. A wife, such a one as his good angel led him to wish for, would have settled his principles. He wants steadiness: but he is not, I hope, a bad man. I was not concerned for his cavalier treatment of you yesterday, but on your own account; lest his roughnesss should give you pain. But his concluding wishes, and his preference of a rival to himself, together with the manner of his departure, unable as he was to withstand his own emotions, and the effect it had upon his spirits, so as to confine him to his chamber, had something great in it—And I shall value him for it, as long as he will permit me.

Sir Charles and my grandmamma had a good deal

* 1 Cor. xiii. 5.

of talk together. Dearly does she love to single him out. What a pretty picture would they make, could they be both drawn so as not to cause a *profane* jester to fall into mistakes; as if it were an old lady making love to a handsome young man!

Let me sketch it out—See, then, the dear lady, with a countenance full of benignity, years written by venerableness, rather than by wrinkles, in her face; dignity and familiarity in her manner; one hand on his, talking to him: his fine countenance shining with modesty and reverence, looking delighted, as admiring her wisdom, and not a little regardful of her half-pointing finger [let that be, for fear of mistakes] to a creature young enough to be her granddaughter; who, to avoid shewing too much sensibility, shall seem to be talking to two other young ladies [Nancy and Lucy, suppose]; but, in order to distinguish the young creature, let her, with a blushing cheek, cast a sly eye on the grandmamma and young gentleman, while the other two shall not be afraid to look more free and unconcerned.

See, my dear, how fanciful I am: but I had a mind to tell you, in a new manner, how my grandmamma and Sir Charles seem to admire each other.

Mr. Deane and he had also some talk together; my uncle joined them: and I blushed in *earnest* at the subject I only *guessed* at from the following words of Mr. Deane, at Sir Charles's rising to come from them to my aunt and me, who both of us sat in the bow-window. My dear Sir Charles Grandison, said Mr. Deane, you love to give pleasure: I never was so happy in my life, as I am in view of this long-wished-for event. You *must* oblige me: I insist upon it.

My aunt took it, as I did.—A generous contention! said she. O my dear! we shall all be too happy. God grant that nothing may fall out to

disconcert us! If there *should*, how many broken hearts—

The first broken one, madam, interrupted I, would be the happiest: I, in that case, should have the advantage of every-body.

Dear love! you are too serious [tears were in my eyes]: Sir Charles's unquestionable honour is our security!—If Clementina be stedfast; if life and health be spared you and him—If—

Dear, dear madam, no more *Ifs!* Let there be but one *If*, and that on Lady Clementina's resumption. In that case, I will submit; and God only (as indeed He always ought) shall be my reliance for the rest of my life.

Lucy, Nancy, and my two cousin Holles's, came and spread, two and two, the other seats of the bow-window (there are but three) with their vast hoops; undoubtedly, because they saw Sir Charles coming to us. It is difficult, whispered I to my aunt (petulantly enough) to get him one moment to one's self. My cousin James (silly youth! thought I) *stopt* him in his way to me; but Sir Charles would not long be stopt: he led the interrupter towards us; and a seat not being at hand, while the young ladies were making a bustle to give him a place between them (tossing their hoops above their shoulders on one side) and my cousin James was hastening to bring him a chair; he threw himself at the feet of my aunt and me, making the floor his seat.

I don't know how it was; but I thought I never saw him look to more advantage. His attitude and behaviour had such a lover-like appearance—Don't you see him, my dear?—His amiable countenance, *so* artless, yet *so* obliging, cast up to my aunt and me: his fine eyes meeting ours; mine, particularly, in their *own* way; for I could not help looking down,

with a kind of proud bashfulness, as Lucy told me afterwards. How affected must I have appeared, had I either turned my head aside, or looked stiffly up, to avoid his!

I believe, my dear, we women in courtship don't love that men, if ever so wise, should keep up to *us* the dignity of wisdom; much less, that they should be solemn, formal, grave—Yet are we fond of respect and observance too—How is it?—Sir Charles Grandison can tell.—Did you think of your brother, Lady G. when you once said, that the man who would commend himself to the general favour of us young women, should be a decent rake in his address, and a saint in his heart? Yet might you not have chosen a better word than *rake?* Are there not more clumsy and foolish rakes, than polite ones; except we can be so much mistaken, as to give to impudence the name of agreeable freedom?

Sir Charles fell immediately into the easiest (shall I say the gallantest?) the most agreeable conversation, as if he must be all of a piece with the freedom of his attitude; and mingled in his talk, two or three very humorous stories; so that nobody thought of helping him again to a chair, or wishing him in one.

How did this little incident familiarize the amiable man, as a still *more* amiable man than before, to my heart! In one of the little tales, which was of a gentleman in Spain serenading his mistress, we asked him, If he could not remember a sonnet he spoke of, as a pretty one? He, without answering, sung it in a most agreeable manner; and, at Lucy's request, gave us the English of it.

It is a very pretty sonnet. I will ask him for a copy, and send it to you, who understand the language.

My grandmamma, on Sir Charles's singing, beckoned to my cousin James; who going to her, she

whispered him. He stept out, and presently returned with a violin, and struck up, as he entered, a minuet-tune. Harriet, my love! called out my grandmamma. Without any other intimation, the most agreeable of men, in an instant, was on his feet, reached his hat, and took me out.

How were we applauded! How was my grand-mamma delighted! The words Charming couple! were whispered round. And when we had done, he led me to my seat with an air that had all the real fine gentleman in it. But then he sat not down as before.—

I wonder if Lady Clementina ever danced with him.

My aunt, at Lucy's whispered request, proposed a dance between Sir Charles and her. You, Lady G. observed, more than once, that Lucy dances finely. Insulter! whispered I to her, when she had done, you know your advantages over me!—Harriet, replied she, what do *good* girls deserve, when they speak against their consciences?

My grandmamma afterwards called upon me for one lesson on the harpsichord; and they made me sing.

An admirable conversation followed at tea, in which my grandmother, aunt, my Lucy, and Sir Charles, bore the chief parts; every other person delighting to be silent.

Had we not, Lady G. a charming day?

In my next I shall have an opportunity, perhaps, to tell you what kind of a travelling companion Sir Charles is. For, be pleased to know, that for some time past a change of air, and a little excursion from place to place, have been prescribed for the establishment of my health, by one of the honestest physicians in England. The day before Sir Charles came into these parts, it was fixed, that to-morrow we should

set out upon this tour. On his arrival, we had thoughts of postponing it; but, having understood our intention, he insisted upon its being prosecuted; and, offering his company, there was no declining the favour, you know, *early* days as they, however, are: and although every-body abroad talks of the occasion of his visit to us; he has been so far from directing his servants to make a secret of it, that he has ordered his Saunders to answer to every curious questioner, that Sir Charles and I were of longer acquaintance than yesterday. But is not this, my dear, a cogent intimation, that Sir Charles thinks some parade, some delay, necessary? Yet don't *he* and *we* know how little a while ago it is, that he made his first declaration? What, my dear (should he be solicitous for an early day) is the inference? My uncle, too, so forward, that I am afraid of him?

We are to set out to-morrow morning. Peterborough is to be our furthest stage, one way. Mr. Deane insists, that we should pass two or three days with him. All of us, but my grandmamma, are to be of this party.

* *

O my dear Lady G. what a letter is just brought me, by the hand that carried up mine on Saturday! Bless me! what an answer!—But I have not time to enter into so large a field. Let me only say, That for some parts I most heartily thank you and dear Lady L.; for others, I do not; and imagine Lady L. would not have subscribed her beloved name, had she read the whole. What charming spirits have you, my dear Lady G.!—But, adieu, my ever-amiable ladies, both!

HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER XXV.

MISS BYRON. IN CONTINUATION.

Thrapston, Tuesday evening, October 17.

We passed several hours at Boughton*, and arrived here in the afternoon. Mr. Deane insisted that we should stop at a nephew's of his in the neighbourhood of this town. The young gentleman met us at Oundle, and conducted us to his house. I have got such a habit of scribbling, that I cannot forbear applying to my pen at every opportunity. The less wonder, when I have your brother for my subject: and the two beloved sisters of that brother to write to.

It would be almost impertinent to praise a man for his horsemanship, who, in his early youth, was so noted for the performance of all his exercises, that his father and General W. thought of the military life for him. Ease and unaffected dignity distinguish him in all his accomplishments. Bless me, madam, said Lucy to my aunt, on more occasions than one, this man is every-thing!

Shall I own, that I am retired to my pen, just now, from a very bad motive? *Anger.* I am, in my heart, even peevish with *all* my friends, for clustering so about Sir Charles, that he can hardly obtain a moment (which he seems to seek for, too) to talk with me alone. My uncle [he *does* dote upon him] always inconsiderately stands in his way; and can I say to a man so *very* inclinable to raillery, that he should allow *me* more, and *himself* less, of Sir Charles's conversation? I wonder my *aunt* does not give my uncle a hint. But she loves Sir Charles's company as well as my uncle.

* The seat of the late Duke of Montagu.

This, however, is nothing to the distress my uncle gave me at dinner this day. Sir Charles was observing, upon the disposition of one part of the gardens at Boughton, That art was to be but the handmaid of nature—I have heard, Sir Charles, said my uncle, that you have made that a rule with you at Grandison-hall. With what pleasure should I make a visit there to *you and my niece*—

He stopt. He *needed not:* he might have said any-thing after this. Sir Charles looked as if concerned for *me;* yet said, that would be a joyful visit to him. My aunt was vexed for *my* sake. Lucy gave my uncle *such* a look—

My uncle afterwards indeed apologized to me—*Ads-heart*, I was a little blunt, I believe. But what *a duce* need there be these niceties observed when you are *sure?*—I am sorry, however—But it would out—Yet you, Hariet, made it worse by looking so silly.

* *

What, Lady G. can I do with this dear man? My uncle, I mean. He has been just making a proposal to me, as he calls it, and with such *honest* looks of forecast and wisdom—Look-ye, Harriet—I shall be always blundering about your *scrupulosities.* I am come to propose something to you that will put it out of my power to make mistakes—I beg of you and your aunt to allow me to enter with Sir Charles into a certain subject; and this not for your sake—I know you won't allow of that—But for the *ease of Sir Charles's own heart.* Gratitude is *my* motive, and ought to be *yours.* I am sure he loves the very ground you tread upon.

I besought him, for *every* sake dear to himself, not to interfere in the matter; but to leave these subjects to my grandmamma.—Consider, Sir, said I,

consider, how very lately the first personal declaration was made.

I do, I will consider every-thing—But there is danger between the cup and the lip.

Dear Sir! (my hands and eyes lifted up) was all the answer I could make. He went from me hastily, muttering good naturedly against *femalities*.

Deane's Grove, Wednesday, October 18.

Mr. Deane's pretty box you have seen. Sir Charles is pleased with it. We looked in at Fotheringay-castle*, Milton†, *&c.* Mr. Charles Deane, a very obliging and sensible young gentleman, attended his uncle all the way.

What charming descriptions of fine houses and curiosities abroad did Sir Charles give us when we stopt to bait, or to view the pictures, furniture, gardens, of the houses we saw!

In every place, on every occasion, on the road, or when we alighted, or put up, he shewed himself so considerate, so gallant, so courteous, to all who approached him, and *so* charitable! Yet not indiscriminately to every-body that asked him: but he was bountiful indeed, on representation of the misery of two honest families. Beggars born, or those who make begging a trade, if in health, and not lame or blind, have seldom, it seems, any share in his munificence: but persons fallen from competence, and such as struggle with some instant distress, or have large families, which they have not ability to maintain; these, and such as these, are the objects of his bounty. Richard Saunders, who is sometimes his almoner, told my Sally, that he never goes out but somebody is the better for him; and that his *manner*

* The prison of Mary Queen of Scots.

† The seat of Earl Fitzwilliams.

of bestowing his charity is *such*, as, together with the poor people's blessings and prayers for him, often draws tears from his eyes.

* *

I, have overheard a dialogue that has just now passed between my uncle and aunt. There is but a thin partition between the room they were in, and mine; and he spoke loud; my aunt not low; yet earnest only, not angry. He had been proposing to her, as he had done to me, to enter into a certain subject, in pity to Sir Charles: none had he for his poor niece. No doubt but he thought he was obliging me; and that my objection was only owing to *femality*, as he calls it: a word I don't like: I never heard it from Sir Charles.

My aunt was not at all pleased with his motion. She wished, as *I* had done, that he would not interfere in these *nice* matters. He took offence at the exclusion, because of the word *nice*. She said, He was too precipitating, a great deal: she did not doubt but Sir Charles would be full early in letting me know his expectations.

She spoke more decisively than she is used to do. He cannot bear her chidings, though ever so gentle. I need not tell you, that he both loves and reveres her; but, as one of the lords of the creation, is apt to be jealous of his prerogatives. You used to be diverted with his honest particularities.

What an *ignoramus* you women and girls make of me, dame Selby! said he. I know nothing of the world, nor of men and women, that's certain. I am always to be *documented* by you and your *minxes!* But the *duce* take your *niceties:* you don't, you can't, poor souls as you are, distinguish *men*. You must all of you go on in one *rig-my-roll* way; in one beaten track. Who the *duce* would have thought it needful, when a girl and we all were wishing till our very

hearts were *bursting*, for this man, when he was not in his own power, that you must now come with your *hums*, and your *haws*, and the whole *circum-roundabouts* of female nonsense, to *stave off* the point your hearts and souls are set upon? I remember, dame Selby, though so long ago, how *you* treated your future lord and master, when you *pranked* it as lady and mistress. You vexed my very soul, I can tell you that! And often and often, when I left you, I swore bitterly, that I never would come again as a lover—though I was a poor forsworn wretch—God forgive me!

My dear Mr. Selby, you should not remember past things. You had very odd ways—I was afraid, for a good while, of venturing with you at all—

Now, dame Selby, I have you at a *why-not*, or I never had; though, by the way, your *un*-evenness increased my oddness.—But what oddness is in Sir Charles Grandison? If *he* is not *even*, neither you nor I were ever *odd*. What reason is there for *him* to run the *female gauntlope*? I pity the excellent man; remembering how I was formerly vexed myself—I hate this *shilly-shally* fooling; this *know-your-mind* and *not* know-your-mind nonsense. As I hope to *live and breathe*, I'll, I'll, I'll blow you all up, without *gunpowder* or *oatmeal*, if an honest gentleman is thus to be fooled with; and after such a letter too from his friend Jeronymo, in the names of the whole family. Lady G. for my money! [Ah, thought I, Lady G. gives better advice than she even *wishes* to know how to take!] I like her notion of parallel lines.—Sir Charles Grandison is none of your *gew-gaw-whip-jacks*, that you know not where to have. But I tell you, dame Selby, that neither you nor your niece know how, with your *fine* souls, and *fine* sense, to go out of the common *femality path*, when you get a man into your gin, however superior he

is to common *infanglements*, and low chicanery, and *dull* and *cold* forms, as Sir Charles properly called them, in his address to the little *pug's-face*. [I *do* love her, with all her pretty ape's tricks: for what are you all, but, right or wrong, apes of one another?] And do you think, with *all your wisdom*, he sees not through you? He does; and, as a wise man, must despise you all, with your *femalities* and *forsooths*—

No femality, Mr. Selby, is designed—No—

I am impatient, dame Selby, light of my eye, and dear to my heart and soul, as you are; I will take my own way in this. I have no mind that the two dearest creatures in the world, to me, should render themselves *despisable* in the eyes of a man they want to think highly of them. And here if I put in, and say but a wry word, as you think it—I am to be called to account—

My dear, did you not begin the subject? said my aunt.

I am to be closetted, and to be *documentized*, proceeded he—Not another word, dame Selby; I am not in humour to bear them: I will take my own way—And that's enough.

And then, I suppose, he stuck his hands in his sides, as he does when he is good-humouredly angry; and my aunt, at such times, gives up, till a more convenient opportunity; and then she always carries her point (because she is always reasonable); for which he calls her a *Parthian* woman.

I heard her say, as he stalked out royally, repeating, that he would take his own way; I say no more, Mr. Selby—Only consider—

Oy, and let Harriet consider, and do *you* consider, dame Selby: Sir Charles Grandison is not a common man.

I did not let my aunt know that I heard this speech of my uncle: she only said to me, when she saw me, I have had a little debate with your uncle: we must do as well as we can with him, my dear. He means well.

Thursday morning, October 19.

After breakfast, first one, then another dropt away, and left only Sir Charles and me together. Lucy was the last that went; and the moment she was withdrawn, while I was thinking to retire to dress, he placed himself by me: Think me not abrupt, my dearest Miss Byron, said he, that I take almost the only opportunity which has offered of entering upon a subject that is next my heart.

I found my face glow. I was silent.

You have given me hope, madam: all your friends encourage that hope. I love, I revere, your friends. What I have now to petition for, is, a confirmation of the hope I have presumed upon. CAN you, madam, (the female delicacy is more delicate than that of man *can* be) unequally as you may think yourself circumstanced with a man who owns that once he could have devoted himself to another lady? CAN you say, that the man before you is the man whom you *can*, whom you *do*, prefer to any other?

He stopt; expecting my answer.

After some hesitations, I have been accustomed, Sir, said I, by those friends whom you so *deservedly* value, to speak nothing but the simplest truth. In an article of this moment, I should be inexcusable, if—

I stopt. His eyes were fixed upon my face. For my life I could not speak; yet wished to be able to speak—

If—If *what*, madam? and he snatched my hand, bowed his face upon it, held it there, not looking up

to mine. I could then speak—If thus urged, and by SIR CHARLES GRANDISON—I did not speak my heart—I answer—Sir—I CAN—I DO.

I wanted, I thought, just then, to shrink into myself.

He kissed my hand with fervour; dropt down on one knee; again kissed it—You have laid me, madam, under everlasting obligation: and will you permit me, before I rise—loveliest of women, will you permit me, to beg an early day?—I have many affairs on my hands; many more in design, now I am come, as I hope, to settle in my native country for the rest of my life. My chief glory will be, to behave commendably in the *private* life. I wish not to be a *public* man; and it must be a very particular call, for the service of my king and country united, that shall draw me out into public notice. Make me, madam, soon the happy *husband* I hope to be. I prescribe not to you the time: but you are above empty forms. May I presume to hope, it will be before the end of a month to come?

He had forgot himself. He said, he would not prescribe to me.

After some involuntary hesitations—I am afraid of nothing so much, just now, Sir, said I, as appearing, to a man of your honour and penetration, affected. Rise, Sir, I beseech you! I cannot bear—

I will, madam, and rise as well as kneel, to thank you, when you have answered a question so very important to my happiness.

Before I could resume, Only believe me, madam, said he, that my urgency is not the insolent urgency of one who imagines a lady will receive as a *compliment* his impatience. And if you have no scruple that you think of *high* importance, add, I beseech you, to the obligation you have laid him under, to your condescending goodness (and add with that frankness of

heart which has distinguished you in my eyes above all women) the very high one, of an early day.

I looked down—I could not look up—I was afraid of being thought affected—Yet how could I so soon think of obliging him?

He proceeded—You are silent, madam!—Propitious be your silence! Allow me to enquire of your *aunt*, for your kind, your condescending acquiescence. I will not now urge you further: I will be all hope.

Let me say, Sir, that I must not be precipitated. These are very early days.

Much more was in my mind to say; but I hesitated—I could not speak. Surely, my dear ladies, it was too early an urgency. And can a woman be wholly unobservant of custom, and the laws of her sex?—Something is due to the fashion in our dress, however absurd that dress might have appeared in the last age (as theirs do to us) or may in the next: and shall not those customs which have their foundation in modesty, and are characteristic of the gentler sex, be intitled to excuse, and more than excuse?

He saw my confusion. Let me not, my dearest life, distress you, said he. Beautiful as your emotion is, I cannot enjoy it, if it give you pain. Yet is the question so important to me; so much is my heart concerned in the favourable answer I hope for from your goodness; that I must not let this opportunity slip, except it be your pleasure that I attend your determination from Mrs. Selby's mouth—Yet *that* I choose not, neither; because I presume for more favour from your own, than you will, on *cold* deliberation, allow your aunt to shew me. Love will plead for its faithful votary in a single breast, when consultation on the supposed fit and unfit, the object absent, will produce delay. But I will retire, for two moments. You shall be my prisoner mean time.

Not a soul shall come in to interrupt us, unless it be at your call. I will return, and receive your determination; and if that be the fixing of my happy day, how will you rejoice me!

While I was debating within myself, whether I should be angry or pleased, he returned, and found me walking about the room.—Soul of my hope, said he, taking with reverence my hand; I now presume that you *can*, that you *will*, oblige me.

You have given me no time, Sir: but let me request, that you will not expect an answer, in relation to the early day you *so* early ask for, till after the receipt of your next letters from Italy. You see how the admirable lady is urged; how reluctantly she has given them but *distant* hopes of complying with their wishes. I should be glad to wait for the next letters; for those, at least, which will be an answer to yours, acquainting them, that there *is* a woman with whom you think you could be happy. I am earnest in this request, Sir. Think it not owing to affectation.

I acquiesce, madam. The answer to those letters will soon be here. It will indeed be some time before I can receive a reply to that I wrote in answer to Jeronymo's last letter. I impute not affectation to my dearest Miss Byron. I can easily comprehend your motive: it is a generous one. But it befits me to say, that the next letters from Italy, whatever may be their contents, can *now* make no alteration on my part. Have I not declared myself to your friends, to you, and to the world?

Indeed, Sir, they *may* make an alteration on mine, highly as I think of the honour Sir Charles Grandison does me by his good opinion. For, pardon me, should the most excellent of women think of resuming a place in your heart—

Let me interrupt you, madam.—It cannot *be*, that

Lady Clementina, proceeding, as she has done, on motives of piety, zealous in her religion, and all her relations now earnest in another man's favour, can alter her mind. I should not have acted with justice, with gratitude, to her, had I not tried her stedfastness by every way I could devise: nor in justice to *both* ladies, would I allow myself to apply for *your* favour, till I had *her* resolution confirmed to me under her own hand after my arrival in England. But were it *now* possible that she should vary, and were you, madam, to hold your determination in my favour suspended; the consequence would be this: I should never, while that suspense lasted, be the husband of *any woman on earth.*

I hope, Sir, you will not be displeased. I did not think you would so *soon* be so *very* earnest. But this, Sir, I say, Let me have reason to think, that my happiness will not be the misfortune of a more excellent woman, and it shall be my endeavour to make the man happy who *only* can make me so.

He clasped me in his arms with an ardor—that displeased me not—on reflection—But at the time startled me. He then thanked me again on one knee. I held out the hand he held not in his, with intent to raise him; for I could not speak. He received it as a token of favour; kissed it with ardor; arose; *again* pressed my cheek with his lips. I was too much surprised to repulse him with anger: But was he not too free? Am I a prude, my dear? In the odious sense of the abused word, I am sure I am not: but in the best sense, as derived from *prudence,* and used in opposition to a word that denotes a worse character, I own myself one of those who would wish to restore it to its natural respectable signification, for the sake of virtue; which, as Sir Charles himself once hinted*, is in danger of suffering by the abuse of it; as religion once did, by that of the word *puritan.*

* Vol. IV.

Sir Charles, on my making towards the door that led to the stairs, withdrew with such a grace, as shewed he was capable of recollection.

Again I ask, Was he not too free? I will tell you how I judge that he was: When I came to conclude my narrative to my aunt and Lucy, of all that passed between him and me, I blushed, and could not tell them how free he was. Yet you see, ladies, that I can write it to you two.

Sir Charles, my uncle, and Mr. Deane, took a little walk, and returned just as dinner was ready. My uncle took me aside, and whispered to me; I am glad at my heart and soul the ice is broken. This is the man of true spirit—*Ads-heart*, Harriet, you will be Lady Grandison in a fortnight, at furthest, I hope. You have had a charming *confabulation*, I doubt not. I can guess you have, by Sir Charles's declaring himself more and more delighted with you. And he owns, that he put the question to you.—Hay, Harriet!—Smiling in my face.

Every one's eyes were upon me. Sir Charles, I believe, saw me look as if I were apprehensive of my uncle's raillery. He came up to us: My dear Miss Byron, said he, in my uncle's hearing, I have owned to Mr. Selby, the request I presumed to make you. I am afraid that he, as well as you, think me too bold and forward. If, madam, *you* do, I ask your pardon: my hopes shall always be controuled by your pleasure.

This made my uncle complaisant to me. I was re-assured. I was pleased to be so seasonably relieved.

Friday morning, October 20.

You must not, my dear ladies, expect me to be so *very* minute: if I am, must I not lose a hundred charming conversations? One, however, I will give you a little particularly.

Your brother desired leave to attend me in my dressing-room—But how can I attempt to describe his air, his manner, or repeat the thousand agreeable things he said? Insensibly he fell into talking of future schemes, in a way that punctilio itself could not be displeased with.

He had been telling me, that our dear Mr. Deane, having been affected by his last indisposition, had desired my uncle, my aunt, and him, to permit him to lay before them the state of his affairs, and the kind things he intended to do by his own relations; who, however, were all in happy circumstances. After which, he insisted upon Sir Charles's being his sole executor, which he scrupled; desiring that some other person should be joined with him in the trust: but Mr. Deane being very earnest on this head, Sir Charles said, I hope I know my own heart: my dear Mr. Deane, you must do as you please.

After some other discourse, I suppose, said I, the good man will not part with us till the beginning of next week.

Whenever you leave him, answered he, it will be to his regret; it may therefore as well be soon: but I am sorry, methinks, that he, who has qualities which endear him to every one, should be so much alone as he is here. I have a great desire, when I can be so happy as to find myself a settled man, to draw into my neighbourhood friends who will dignify it. Mr. Deane will, I hope, be often our visiter at the hall. The love he bears to his dear god-daughter will be his inducement; and the air and soil being more dry and wholesome than this so near the fens, may be a means to prolong his valuable life.

Dr. Bartlett, continued he, has already carried into execution some schemes which relate to my indigent neighbours, and the lower class of my tenants. How does that excellent man revere Miss Byron!

—My Beauchamp, with our two sisters and their lords, will be often with us. Your worthy cousin Reeves's, Lord W. and his deserving lady, will also be our visiters, and we theirs, in turn. The Mansfield family are already within a few miles of me: and our Northamptonshire friends!—Visiters and visited—What happiness do I propose to myself, and the beloved of my heart—And if (as you have generously wished) the dear Clementina may be happy, at least not unhappy, and her brother Jeronymo recover; what, in this world, can be wanting to crown our felicity?

Tears of joy strayed down my cheek, unperceived by me, till they fell upon his hand, as it had mine in it. He kissed them away. I was abashed. If my dear Miss Byron permit me to go on, I have her advice to ask.—I bowed my assent. My heart throbbed with painful joy: I could not speak.

Will *it not be too early*, madam, to ask you about some matters of domestic concern? The lease of the house in St. James's Square is expired. Some difficulties are made to renew it, unless on terms which I think unreasonable. I do not easily submit to imposition. Is there any-thing that you particularly like in the situation of that house?

Houses, Sir, nay, countries, will be alike to me, in the company of those I value.

You are all goodness, madam. I will leave it to my sisters, to enquire after another house. I hope you will allow them to consult you, as any one may offer. I will write to the owner of my present house (who is solicitous to know my determination, and says he has a tenant ready, if I relinquish it) that it will be at his command in three months time. When my dear Miss Byron shall bless me with her hand, and our Northamptonshire friends will part with her, if she pleases, we will go directly to the hall.

I bowed, and intended to look as one who thought herself obliged.

Restrain, check me, madam, whenever I seem to trespass on your goodness. Yet how shall I forbear to wish you to hasten the day that shall make you wholly mine?—You will the rather allow me to wish it, as you will then be more than ever your own mistress; though you have always been generously left to a discretion that never was more deservedly trusted to. Your will, madam, will ever comprehend mine.

You leave me, Sir, only room to say, that if gratitude can make me a merit with you, *that* began with the first knowledge I had of you; and it has been increasing ever since—I hope I never shall be ungrateful.

Tears again strayed down my cheeks. Why did I weep?

Delicate sensibility! said he. He clasped his arms about me—But instantly withdrew them, as if recollecting himself—Pardon me, madam! Admiration will sometimes mingle with reverence. I must express my gratitude as a man—May my happy day be not far distant, that I may have no bound to my joy! —He took my hand, and again pressed it with his lips. My heart, madam, said he, is in your hand: you cannot but treat it graciously.

Just then came in my Nancy [Why came she in?] with the general expectation of us to breakfast—Breakfast!—What, thought I, is breakfast!—The *world*, my Charlotte—But hush!—Withdraw, fond heart, from my pen! Can the *dearest* friend allow for the acknowledgment of impulses so fervent, and which, writing to the moment, as I may say, the moment only can justify revealing?

He led me down-stairs, and to my seat, with an air *so* noble, yet *so* tender—My aunt, my Lucy,

every-body—looked at me. My eyes betrayed my hardly-conquered emotion.

Sir Charles's looks and behaviour were so respectful, that every one addressed me as a person of increased consequence. Do you think, Lady G. that Lord G.'s and Lord L.'s respectful behaviour to their wives do not as much credit to their own hearts, as to their ladies? How happy are you, that you have recollected yourself, and now encourage not others, by your example, to make a jest of a *husband*'s love!—Will you forgive me the recollection, for the sake of the joy I have in the reformation?—

* *

I have read this letter, just now, to my aunt and Lucy, all except this last saucy hint to you. They clasped me each in their arms, and said, they admired *him*, and were pleased with *me*. Instruct me, my dear ladies, how to behave in such a manner, as may shew my gratitude (I had almost said my love); yet not go so very far, as to leave the day, the hour, every-thing, to his determination!

But, on reading to my aunt and Lucy what I had written, I was ashamed to find, that when he was enumerating the friends he hoped to have near him, or about him, I had forgot to remind him of my Emily. Ungrateful Harriet!—But don't tell her that I was so absorbed in self, and that the conversation was so interesting, that my heart was more of a passive than an active machine at the time. I will soon *find*, or *make*, an occasion to be her solicitress. You once thought that Emily, for her *own* sake, should not live with us; but her heart is set upon it. Dear creature! I love her! I will sooth her! I will take her to my bosom!—I will, by my sisterly compassion, intitle myself to all her confidence: she shall have all mine. Nor shall her guardian suspect her.

—I will be as faithful to her secret, as you and Lady L. were (thankfully I remember it!) to mine. Do you think, my dear, that if Lady Clementina [I bow to her merit whenever I name her to myself] had had such a true, such a soothing friend, to whom she could have revealed the secret that oppressed her noble heart, while her passion was young, it would have been attended with such a deprivation of her reason, as made unhappy all who had the honour of being related to her?

* *

O my dear Lady G.! I am undone! Emily is undone; we are all undone!—I am afraid so!—My intolerable carelessness!—I will run away from him! I cannot look him in the face!—But I am most, most of all, concerned for my Emily!

Walking in the garden with Lucy, I dropt the last sheet, marked 6, of this letter *.

I missed it not till my aunt this minute told me, that Sir Charles, crossing the walk which I had just before quitted, stooped, and took up a paper. Immediately my heart misgave me. I took out my letter: I thought I had it all—But the fatal, fatal sixth sheet, is wanting: that must be what he stooped for, and took up. What shall I do?—Sweet Emily! now will he never suffer you to live with him. All my own heart laid open too!—Such prattling also!—I *cannot* look him in the face!—How shall I do, to get away to Shirley-manor, and hide myself in the indulgent bosom of my grandmamma?—What affectation, after this, will it be, to refuse him his day!—But he demands audience of me. Could any-thing (O the dear Emily!) have happened more mortifying to your

HARRIET BYRON?

* Beginning, Why did I weep? p. 160.

LETTER XXVI.

MISS BYRON. IN CONTINUATION.

Friday afternoon, October 20.

I WAS all confusion when he, looking as unconscious as he used to do, entered my dressing-room. I turned my face from him. He seemed surprised at my concern. Miss Byron, I hope, is well. Has any-thing disturbed you, madam?

My paper, my paper! You took it up—For the world I would not—The poor Emily!—Give it me; Give it me; and I burst into tears.—

Was there ever such a fool? What business had I to name Emily?

He took it out of his pocket. I came to give it to you; putting it into my hand. I saw it was your writing, madam: I folded it up immediately: it has not been unfolded since: not a single sentence did I permit myself to read.

Are you sure, Sir, you have not read it; nor any part of it?—

Upon my honour, I have not.

I cleared up at once. A blessed reward, thought I, for denying my own curiosity, when pressed by my Charlotte to read a letter clandestinely obtained!

A thousand, thousand thanks to you, Sir, for not giving way to your curiosity. I should have been miserable, perhaps, for months, had you read that paper.

You now indeed raise my curiosity, madam. Perhaps your generosity will permit you to gratify it; though I should not have forgiven myself, had I taken advantage of such an accident.

I will tell you the contents of some parts of it, Sir.

Those which relate to my Emily, if you please,

madam. The *poor* Emily, you said.—You have alarmed me. Perhaps I am not to be *quite* happy! —What of *poor* Emily! Has the girl been imprudent?—Has she already—What of the *poor* Emily?

And his face glowed with impatience.

No harm, Sir, of Emily!—Only a request of the dear girl! [What better use could I have made of my fright, Lady G.?] But the *manner* of my mentioning it, I would not for the world you should have seen.

No harm, you say!—I was afraid, by your concern for her—But can *you* love her, as well as ever? If you can, Emily must still be good.

I can: I do.

What then, dear madam, of *poor* Emily? Why *poor* Emily?—

I will tell you. The dear girl makes it her request, that I will procure of you one favour for her: Her heart is set upon it.

If Emily continue good, she shall only signify her wish, and I will comply. If *I* am not a father to her, is she not fatherless?

Allow me, Sir, to call you kind! good! humane!

What I want of those qualities, Miss Byron will teach me, by her example—But what would my Emily?—

She would live with her guardian, Sir.—

With *me*, madam?—And with *you*, madam?—Tell me, own to me, madam, *And* with you?

That is her wish.—

And does my beloved Miss Byron think it a *right* wish to be granted? Will *she* be the instructing friend, the exemplary sister, now in that time of the dear girl's life, when the eye, rather than the judgment, is usually the director of a young woman's affections?

I love the sweet innocent: I could wish her to be always with me.

Obliging goodness! Then is one of my cares over. A young woman, from fourteen to twenty, is often a troublesome charge upon a friendly heart. I could not have asked this favour of you. You rejoice me by mentioning it. Shall I write a letter, in your name, to Emily?

There, Sir, are pen, ink, and paper.

In *your* name, madam?

I bowed assent; mistrusting nothing.

He wrote; and doubling down, shewed me only these words—'My dear Miss Jervois, I have obtained for you the desired favour. Will you not continue to be as good as you have hitherto been? —That is all which is required of my Emily, by her ever-affectionate—

I instantly wrote, '*Harriet Byron.*'—But, Sir, what have you doubled down?

Charming confidence!—What must he be, who could attempt to abuse it?—Read, madam, what you have signed.

I did. How my heart throbbed.—And *could* Sir Charles Grandison, said I, thus *intend* to deceive? *Could* Sir Charles Grandison be such a plotter? Thank God you are not a bad man.

After the words, *I have obtained for you the desired favour*, followed these;

'You must be very good. You must resolve to give me nothing but joy; joy equal to the love I have for you, and to the sacrifice I have made to oblige you. Go down, my love, as soon as you can, to Grandison-hall: I shall then have one of the sisters of my heart there to receive me. If you are there in less than a fortnight, I will endeavour to be with you in a fortnight after. I sacrifice, at least, another fortnight's punctilio to oblige you. And will you not continue to be as good as you have *hitherto* been? That is all which is required of my Emily, by, *&c.*'

Give me the paper, Sir; holding out my hand for it.

Have I forfeited my character with you, madam?—holding it back, with an air of respectful gaiety.

I must consider, Sir, before I give you an answer.

If I have, why should I not send it away; and, as Miss Byron cannot deny her hand-writing, hope to receive the benefit of the supposed deceit? Especially as it will answer so many good ends: for instance, your own wishes in Emily's favour; as it will increase your own power of obliging; and be a means of accelerating the happiness of a man whose principal joy will be in making you happy.

Was it not a pretty piece of deceit, Lady G.? Shall I own, that my heart was more inclined to reward than punish him for it? And really, for a moment, I thought of the impracticableness of complying with the request, as if I was seriously pondering upon it, and was sorry it was not practicable. To get away from my dear Mr. Deane, thought I, who will not be in haste to part with us; some female bustlings to be got over on our return to Selby-house; proposal renewed, and a little paraded with [Why, Lady G. did you tell me that our sex is a foolish sex?] the preparation; the ceremony; the awful ceremony! the parting with the dearest and most indulgent friends that ever young creature was blessed with: and to be at Grandison-hall, *all* within one month!—Was there ever so precipitating a man?

I believe verily, that I appeared to him as if I were considering of it; for he took advantage of my silence, and urged me to permit him to send away to Emily what he had written; and offered to give reasons for his urgency: Written as it is, said he, by me, and signed by you, how will the dear girl rejoice at the consent of both, under our hands! And will she not take the caution given her in it from me, as kindly as she will your mediation in her favour?

Sure, Sir, said I, you expect not a serious answer? —Upon his honour, he did—How, Sir! Ought you not rather to be thankful, if I forgive you, for letting me see that Sir Charles Grandison was capable of such an artifice, though but in jest: and for his reflection upon me, and perhaps meant on our sex, as if decorum were but *punctilio*? I beg my Lucy's pardon, added I, for being half-angry with her when she called you a *designer*.

My dearest creature, said he, I *am* a designer. Who, to accelerate a happiness on which that of his whole life depends, would not be innocently so? I am, in this instance, selfish: but I glory in my selfishness; because I am determined, if power be lent me, that every one, within the circle of our acquaintance, shall have reason to congratulate you as one of the happiest of women.

Till this artifice, Sir, shewed me what you *could* do, were you not a man of the strictest honour, I had nothing but affiance in you. Give me the paper, Sir; and, for your own sake, I will destroy it, that it may not furnish me with an argument, that there is not *one* man in the world who is to be implicitly confided in by a woman.

Take it, madam (presenting it to me); destroy it not, however, till you have exposed me as *such* a breach of confidence *deserves*, to your aunt, your Lucy—To your uncle Selby; and Mr. *Deane*, if you please.

Ah, Sir! you know your advantages! I will not, in this case, refer to them: I could sooner rely, dearly as they love their Harriet, on Sir Charles Grandison's justice, than on their favour, in *any* debate that should happen between him and me.

There never, madam, except in the case before us, can be room for a reference: your prudence, and my gratitude, must secure us both. Even now, im-

patient as I am to call you mine, which makes me willing to lay hold of every opportunity to urge you for an early day, I will endeavour to subdue that impatience, and submit to your will. Yet, let me say, that if I did not think your heart one of the most laudably unreserved, yet truly delicate, that woman ever boasted, and your prudence equal, you would not have found me so acquiescent a lover, early as you *suppose* my urgency for the happy day.

And is it *not* early, Sir? Can Sir Charles Grandison think me punctilious?—But you will permit me to write to Miss Jervois *myself*, and acquaint her with her granted wish, if—

If! No *if*, madam—Whatever you think right to be done, in this case, that do. Emily will be more particularly your ward than mine, if you condescend to take the trust upon you.

You will be pleased, dear Lady G. to acquaint Emily with the grant of her wish: she will rejoice. God give the dear creature reason for joy; and then I shall have double pleasure in having contributed to her obtaining of it. But, on second thoughts, I will write to her myself; for I allow not, that she shall see or hear read every-thing I write to you.

Shall I own to you, that my grandmamma, and aunt, and Lucy, are of your opinion? They all three wish—But who can deny the dear innocent the grant of a request on which she has so long set her heart? And would it not be pity, methinks I hear the world say, some time hence, especially if any misfortune (God forbid it!) should befall her, that Sir Charles Grandison, the most honourable of men, should so marry, as that a young lady of innocence and merit, and mistress of a fortune, which, it might be foreseen, would encourage the attempts of designing men, could not have lived with his wife?—Poor child!—Then would the *world* have

shaken its wise head (allow the expression); and well for me if it had judged so mildly of me.

Our dear Mr. Deane, though reluctantly, has consented that we shall leave him on Monday next. We shall set out directly for Selby-house, where we propose to be the same night. My aunt and I have been urgent with him to go back with us; but he is cross, and *will* be excused.

Just now Lucy tells me, that Mr. Deane declared to my uncle, aunt, and her, that he will not visit us at Selby-house till we send for him and the settlements together, which he will have ready in a week —Strange expedition! Sure they are afraid your brother will change his mind, and are willing to put it out of his power to recede! Lucy smiles at me, and is sure, she says, that she may in confidence reveal all these matters to me, without endangering my *life*. My next letter will be from Selby-house.

While that life continues, my dear ladies, look upon me assuredly yours,

HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER XXVII.

LADY G. TO MISS BYRON.

Monday, October 23.

Go on, go on, with your narratives, my dear. Hitherto Caroline and I know not how either much to blame you, or totally to acquit you of *parade*, the man and his situation considered; and the state of your heart for so many months past; every one of your friends—consenting, shall I say?—*more* than consenting—*ardent*, to be related to him. Hark ye, Harriet, let me whisper you—My brother, whether

he come honestly, or not, by his knowledge, I dare say, thinks not so highly of the free-masonry part of marriage as you do!—You start, O Charlotte! you cry:—And, O Harriet! too—But my dear girl, let my brother see, that you think (and no woman in the world does, if you don't) that the true modesty, after hearts are engaged, is to think little of parade, and much of the social happiness that awaits two worthy minds united by love, and conformity of sentiment—After all, we are silly creatures, Harriet: we are afraid of wise men. No wonder that we seldom choose them, when a fool offers. I wish I knew the man, however, who dared to say this in my hearing.

Your grandmother Shirley is more than woman: my brother prodigiously admires her. I think you may trust to her judgment, if you suppose him too precipitating. Your aunt is an excellent woman: but I never knew a woman or man, who valued themselves on delicacy, and found themselves consulted upon it, but was apt to over-do the matter. Is not this a little, a *very* little, Mrs. Selby's case? Let her know, that I bid you ask this question of herself: she must be assured that I equally love and honour her; so won't be angry.

Your uncle is an odd, but a very honest Dunstable soul! Tell him, I say so; but withal, that he should leave women to act as *women*, in these matters. *What a duce, what a pize*, would he expect perfection from them? He, whose arguments always run in the depreciating strain? If he *would*, ask him, *Where* should they have it, conversing, as they are obliged to do, with men? Men for their fathers, for their brothers, for their uncles—They *must* be a *little* silly, had they not a *fund* of silliness in themselves. —But I would not have them be most *out*, in matters where they should be most *in*.

I think, however, so does Lady L. that so far as you have proceeded, you are tolerable; though not half so clever as he, considering situations. Upon my word, Harriet, allowing for every-thing, neither of Sir Charles Grandison's sisters expected that their brother would have made so ardent, so polite, a lover. He is so *prudent* a man, and that once had like to have been one of *your*, even *your* objections. —Yet so nobly sincere—so manly. O that my ape —But come, Harriet, as men go in this age of monkeys and Sir Foplings, Lord G. (for all *you*) is not to be despised. I, as a good wife ought, will take his part, whoever runs him down. Where much is not given, much, and so-forth—

I have told Emily the good news: I could not help it, though you promise to write to her.

Poor thing! she is all ecstasy! She is not the only one who seeks, as her greatest good, what may possibly prove her greatest misfortune. But for her sake, for your sake, and my brother's, I hope, under your directing eye, and by prudent management (the flame so young) a little cold water will do; and that if it *will* blaze, it may be directed towards Beauchamp's house.

Let me whisper you again, Harriet—Young girls, finding themselves vested with new powers, and a set of new inclinations, turn their staring eyes out of themselves; and the first man they see, they imagine, if he be a single man, and but simpers at them, they must receive him as a lover: then they return downcast for ogle, that he may ogle on without interruption. They are soon brought to write answers to letters which confess flames the writer's heart never felt. The girl doubts not her own gifts, her own consequence: she wonders that her father, mother, and other friends, never told her of these new-found excellencies: she is more and more beautiful in her

own eyes, as he more and more flatters her. If her parents are *a*-verse, the girl is *per*-verse; and the more, the less discretion there is in her passion. She adopts the word *constancy;* she declaims against *persecution:* she calls her idle flame, LOVE; a cupidity, which only was a something she knew not what to make of—and, like a wandering bee, had it not settled on this flower, would on the next, were it either bitter or sweet.

And this generally, with the thoughtless, is the beginning and progress of that formidable invader, miscalled *love;* a word very happily at hand, to help giddy creatures to talk with, and look without confusion of face on, a man telling them a thousand lies, and hoping, perhaps by illaudable means, to attain an end not in *itself* illaudable, when duty and discretion are, the one the guide, the other the gentle restraint.

But as to Emily—I depend on her *principles*, as well as on your affectionate discretion (when you will be pleased, among ye, to permit my brother *to be actually yours*) for restraining her imagination. There never beat in female bosom an honester heart. Poor thing! she is *but* a girl! And who is the woman, or child, that looks on my brother without love and reverence?

For Emily's sake, you see, you must not have too many of your honest uncle's *circum-roundabouts.* He makes us laugh. I love to have him angry with his dame Selby. Dear Harriet, when your heart's quite at ease, give us the courtship of the odd soul to *the light of his eyes; his* oddness, and *her* delicacy! A charming contrast! You *did* help us to a little of it once, you know. Theirs, on the woman's side, could not be a match of love at first: but who so happy as they? I am convinced, Harriet, that love on one side, and discretion on the other, is enough in con-

science; and, in short, much better than love on both: for what room can there be for discretion, in the latter case? The man is guilty of a heterodoxy in love, you know, who is *prudent*, or but suspected of being so!—Ah Harriet, Harriet, once more I say, we women are foolish creatures in our love-affairs, and know not what's best for ourselves.—In your stile—'Don't you think so, Lucy?"—Yet I admire Lucy—She got over an improperly-placed love; and now, her mad fit over [we have *all* little or much of it; *begun*, as I told you how] she is *so* cool, *so* quiet, *so* sedate—Yet once I make no doubt, looking forward to her present happy quiescence, would have thought it a state of insipidity. Dearly do we love racketing; and another whisper, some of us to be racketed—But not *you!* you are an exception. Yes, to be sure!—But I believe you'll think me mad.

We like my brother's little trick upon you in the billet he wrote, and which you signed, as if to Emily. You see how earnest he is, my dear. I long for his next letters from Italy. I think that is a lucky plea enough for you, if you suppose parade necessary.

We have got Everard among us again. The sorry fellow—O Harriet, had you seen him, with his hat upon his two thumbs, bowing, cringing, blushing, confounded, when first he came into my royal presence. But I, from my throne, extended the golden sceptre to him, as I knew I should please my brother by it. He sat down, when I bid him, twisted his lips, curdled his chin, hemm'd, stole a look of reverence at me, looked down when his eyes met mine; *mine* bold as innocence, *his* conscious as guilt; hemm'd again, turned his hat about: then with one of his not quite-forgotten airs of pertness, putting it under his arm, shook his ears, tried to look up; then

his eye sunk again under my broader eye.—O my dear, what a paltry creature is a man vice-bitten, and sensible of detected folly, and obligation!

Sir Charles has made a man of him, once more. His dress is as gay as ever; and, I dare say, he struts as much in it as ever, in company that knows not how he came by it. *He* reformed!—Bad habits are of the Jerusalem-artichoke kind; once planted, there is no getting them out of the ground.

Our good Dr. Bartlett is also with us, at present: he is in hopes of seeing my brother in town—'In town,' Harriet!—and the great affair un-solemnized!—Woe be to you, if—But let's see how you act when left to yourself. Prudent people, in others matters, are not always prudent in their own; especially in their love-affairs. A little over-nicety at setting out, will carry them into a road they never intended to amble in; and then they are sometimes obliged to the *less* prudent to put them in the path they set out from. Remember, my dear, *I* am at hand, if you bewilder yourself.

Dr. Bartlett tells us, that my brother has extricated this poor creature from his entanglements with his woman, by his interposition only by letter: some money, I suppose. The doctor desires to be silent, on the means; but hints, however, that Everard will soon be in circumstances not unhappy.

* *

I have got the doctor to explain himself. Every day produces some new instances of women's follies. What would poor battered rakes and younger brothers do, when on their last legs, were it not for good natured widows?—Ay, and sometimes for forward maids? This wretch, it seems, has acquitted himself so handsomely in the discharge of the 100l. which he owed to his wine-merchant's relict, and the lady was so full of acknowledgments, and obli-

gations, and all that, for being paid but her due, that he has ventured to make love to her, as it is called, and is well received. He behaves with more spirit before her, I suppose, than he does before me.

The widow had a plain, diligent, honest man, before. She has what is called *taste*, forsooth, or believes she has. She thinks Mr. Grandison a finer gentleman than him who left her in a condition to be thought worthy the address of a gayer man. She prides herself, it seems, in the relation that her marriage will give her to a man of Sir Charles Grandison's character. Much *worse* reasons will have weight, when a woman finds herself inclined to change her condition. But Everard is very earnest that my brother should know nothing of the matter till all is over: so you (as I) have this piece of news in confidence. Lady L. has not been told it. His cousin, he says, who refused him his interest with Miss Mansfield, Lady W.'s sister, because he thought a further time of probation, with regard to his avowed good resolutions, necessary, would perhaps, for the widow's sake, if applied to, *put a spoke in his wheel.*

Everard (I can hardly allow myself to call him Grandison) avows a vehement passion for the widow. She is *rich.*—When they are set out together in *taste*, as she calls it, trade, or business, her first rise, quite forgot, what a gay, what a frolick dance will she and her new husband, in a little while, lead up, on the grave of her poor, plain, despised one!

'Tis well, 'tis well, my dear Harriet, that I have a multitude of faults myself [witness, to go no further back, this letter] or I should despise nine parts of the world out of ten.

I find that Sir Charles, and Beauchamp, and Dr. Bartlett, correspond. Light is hardly more active than my brother, nor lightning more quick, when

he has any-thing to execute that must or ought to be done. I believe I told you early, that was a part of his character. You must not then wonder, or be offended [Shall I use the word *offended*, my dear?] that you, in your turn, now he has found himself at liberty to address you, should be affected by his adroitness and vivacity in your *femalities*, as uncle Selby calls them: aptly enough, I think; though I do not love that men should be so impudent, as either to abuse us, or even to find us out. You cannot always, were you to *think* him too precipitating, separate disagreeable qualities from good in the same person; since, perhaps, the one is the constitutional occasion of the other. Could he, for example, be half so useful a friend as he is, if he were to dream over a love-affair, as you would seem to have him; in other words, gape over his ripened fruit till it dropt into his yaw-yaw-yawning mouth? He'll certainly get you, Harriet, within, or near, his proposed time. Look about you. He'll have you before you know where you are. By *hook*, as the saying is, will he pull you to him, struggle as you will (he has already got hold of you) *or by crook;* inviting, nay, compelling you, by his generosity, gentle shepherd-like, to nymph as gentle. What you do, therefore, do with such a grace as may preserve to you the appearance of having it in your power to lay an obligation upon him. It is the opinion of both his sisters, that he values you more for your noble expansion of heart, and not ignorant, but generous frankness of manners, yet mingled with dignity; than for—even—your beauty, Harriet—Whether you, who are in such full possession of every grace of person, care, as a woman, to hear of that, or not. His gay parterre similitude you remember, my dear. It is my firm belief, that those are the greatest admirers of fine flowers, who love to see them in their borders, and seldomest

pluck the fading fragrance. The other wretches crop, put them in their bosoms, and in an hour or two, rose, carnation, or whatever they be, after one parting smell, throw them away.

He is very busy, wherever he is. At his inn, I suppose, most. But he boasts not to you, or anybody, of what he does.

He writes now-and-then a letter to aunt Nell, and she is *so* proud of the favour—Look you here, niece; look you here!—But I sha'n't shew you *all* he writes.—On go the spectacles—for she will not for the world part with the letter out of her hands.—She reads one paragraph, one sentence, then another.—On and off go the spectacles, while she conjectures, explains, animadverts, applauds; and so goes on till she leaves not a line unread: then folding it up carefully in its cover, puts it in her letter or ribband-case, which shall I call it? For having but few letters to put in it, the case is filled with bits and ends of ribbands, patterns, and-so-forth, of all manner of colours, faded and fresh; with *intermingledoms* of gold-beaters skin, plaisters for a cut finger, for a chapt lip, a kibe, perhaps for corns; which she dispenses occasionally very bountifully, and values herself (as we see at such times by a double chin made triple) for being not unuseful in her generation. Chide me, if you will; the humour's upon me; hang me if I care: you are only Harriet Byron, as yet. Change your name, and increase your consequence.

I have written a long letter already; and to what end? Only to expose myself, say you? True enough. But now, Harriet, to bribe you into passing a milder censure, let me tell you all I can pick up from the doctor, relating to my brother's matters. Bribe shall I call this, or gratitude, for your free communications?

Matters between the Mansfields and the Keelings are brought very forward. Hang particulars: nobody's affairs lie near my heart, but yours. The two families have already begun to visit. When my brother returns, all the gentry in the neighbourhood are to be invited, to rejoice with the parties on the occasion.

Be so kind, my dear, as to dismiss the good man, as soon as your punctilio will admit. We are contented, that, while he lays himself out so much in the service of others, he should do something for himself. You, my dear, we look upon as a high reward for his many great and good actions. But, as he is a man who has a deep sense of favours granted, and values not the blessing the more (when it *ought* to be within his reach) because it is dear, as is the case of the sorry fellows in general, I would have you consider of it—that's all.

The doctor tells me, also, that the wicked Bolton's ward is dead; and that every-thing is concluded, to Sir Charles's satisfaction, with him; and the Mansfields (reinstated in all their rights) are once more a happy family.

Sir Hargrave is in a lamentable way; Dr. Bartlett has great compassion for him. Would you have *me* pity him, Harriet?—You would, you say—Well, then, I'll try for it. As it was by his means you and we, and my brother, came acquainted, I think I *may*. He is to be brought to town.

Poor Sir Harry Beauchamp! He is past recovery. Had the physicians given him over when they first undertook him, he might, they say, have had a chance for it.

I told you, that Emily's mother was turned methodist. She has converted her husband. A strange alteration! But it is natural for such sort of people to pass from one extreme to another. Emily every

now-and-then visits them. They are ready to worship her, for her duty and goodness. She is a lovely girl: she every day improves in her person, as well as in her mind. She is sometimes with me; sometimes with Lady L.; sometimes with aunt Eleanor; sometimes with your Mrs. Reeves—We are ready to fight for her: but you will soon rob all of us. She is preparing for her journey to you. Poor girl! I pity her. *Such* a conflict in her mind, between her love of you, and tenderness for her guardian: her Anne has confessed to me, that she weeps one half of the night: yet forces herself to be lively in company—After the example of Miss Byron, she says, when she visited you at Selby-house. I hope, my dear, all will be right. But to go to live with a beloved object—I don't understand it. You, Harriet, may. I never was in love, God help me!

I am afraid the dear girl does too much for her mother. As they have so handsome an annuity, 400l. a year, so much beyond their expectation; I think she should not give, nor should they receive, any-thing considerable of her, without her guardian's knowledge She is laying out a great deal of money in new clothes, to do you and her guardian credit—on your nuptials, poor thing! she says, with tears in her eyes—but whether of joy, or sensibility, it is hard to decide; but I believe of both.

What makes me imagine she does more than she should, is, that a week ago she borrowed fifty guineas of me; and but yesterday came to me—I should do a very wrong thing, said she, blushing up to the ears, should I ask Lady L. to lend me a sum of money till my next quarter comes due, after I made myself *your* debtor so lately: but if you *could* lend me thirty or forty guineas more, you would do me a great favour.

My dear! said I; and stared at her.

Don't question, don't chide me, this one time. I never will run in debt again; I hate to be in debt. But you have bid me tell you all my wants.

I will not, my love, say another word. I will fetch you fifty guineas more.

More, my dear Lady G.! that is a pretty rub: but I will always, for the future, be within bounds: and don't let my guardian know it—He will kill me by his generosity; yet perhaps, in his own heart, wonder what I did with my money. If *he* thought ill of me, or that I was extravagant, it would break my heart.

Only, my dear, said I, remember, that 400l. a year—Mrs. O'Hara cannot want any-thing to be done for her now.

Don't call her Mrs. O'Hara! She is very good: call her my mother.

I kissed the sweet girl, and fetched her the other fifty guineas.

I thought it not amiss to give you this hint, my dear, against she goes down to you. But do you think it right, after all, to have her with my brother and you?

Lady L. keeps close—She fasts, cries, prays, is vastly apprehensive: she makes me uneasy for her and myself. These vile men! I believe I shall hate them all. Did *they* partake—But not half so grateful as the blackbirds: they rather look big with insolence, than perch near, and sing a song to comfort the poor souls they have so grievously mortified. Other birds, as I have observed (sparrows, in particular) sit hour and hour, he's and she's, in turn; and I have seen the hen, when her rogue had staid too long, *rattle* at him, while he circles about her with sweeping wings, and displayed plumage, his head and breast of various dyes, ardently shining

Peep, peep, peep; as much as to say, I beg your pardon, love—I was forced to go a great way off for my dinner.—Sirrr-rah! I have thought she has said, in an unforgiving accent—Do your duty now—Sit close—Peep, peep, peep—I will, I will, I will—Away she has skimmed, and returned to relieve him—when she thought fit.

'Don't laugh at us, Harriet, in our mortified state [Begone, wretch—*What have I done, madam?* staring! What have you done!—My sorry creature came in wheedling, courting, just as I was pitying two meek sisters: Was it not enough to vex one?]—Don't laugh at us, I say—*If you do!*—May my brother, all in good time, avenge us on *you*, prays, in malice,

CHARLOTTE G.

LETTER XXVIII.

MISS BYRON TO LADY G.

Wednesday evening, October 25.

Fie upon you, Lady G! What a letter have you written! There is no separating the good from the bad in it! With what dangerous talents are you entrusted! and what use do you make of them! I have written two long letters, continuing my narrative of our proceedings; but I must take you to severe task for this before me; and *this* and *they* shall go together!

Wicked wit! What a foe art thou to decent cheerfulness!—In a *woman*'s hand such a weapon! What might we not expect from it, were it in a man's? How you justify the very creatures of that sex, whom you would be thought to despise!

But you say, you would not allow in a man, the liberties you yourself take with your own sex. How can you, my dear, be so partial to your faults, yet own them to be such? Would you rank with the worst of sinners? They do just so.

I may be a fool: I may be inconsistent: I may not know how with a grace to give effect to my own wishes: I may be able to advise better than act—Most pragmatical creatures think they can be counsellors in another's case, while their own affairs, as my uncle would say, *lie at sixes and sevens.* But how does this excuse your freedoms with your whole sex—With the innocents of it, more particularly?

Let me say, my dear, that you take odious, yes *odious,* liberties; I won't recal the word; liberties which I cannot, though to shame you, repeat. Fie upon you, Charlotte!

And yet you say, that neither you nor Lady L. know how to blame me much, though, the man considered, you will not totally acquit me of parade; and in another place, that so far as we have proceeded, we have behaved tolerably. Why, then, all this riot?—yes, riot, Charlotte! against us, and against our sex? *What,* but for riot's sake?

'The humour upon you!'—The humour is upon you, with a witness! 'Hang you, if you care!'—But, my dear, it would be more to your credit, if you *did* care; and if you checked the wicked humour.—Do you think nobody but you has such talents? Fain would I lower you, since, as it is evident, you take pride in your *licence*—Forgive me, my dear—Yet I will not say half I think of your wicked wit. Think you, that there are not many who could be as smart, as surprising, as you, were they to indulge a vein of what you call humour? Do you think your brother is not one? Would not he be too hard for you at your own weapons?

Has he not convinced you that he could? But he, a *man*, can check the overflowing freedom.

But if I *have* set out wrong with your brother, I will do my endeavour to recover my path. You greatly oblige me with your conducting hand: but what necessity was there for you to lead me through briars and thorns, and to plunge me into two or three dirty puddles, in order to put me into the right path, when it lay before you in a direct line, without going a bow-shoot about?

Be pleased, however, to consider situation, on *my* side, as well as on your brother's: I might be somewhat excusable for my awkwardness, perhaps, were it considered, that the notion of a *double* or *divided love*, on the man's part, came often into my head; indeed could not be long out; the lady so superlatively excellent! his affection for her, so *allowably*, as well as *avowedly*, strong! Was it possible to avoid little jealousies, little petulances, when slights were imaginable? The more, for the excellency of the man; the more for my past weakness of *so many months*? I pretend not, my dearest Charlotte, to be got above nature: I know I am a weak silly girl: I am humbled in the sense I have of his and Clementina's superior merits. True love will ever make a person think meanly of herself, in proportion as she thinks highly of the object. Pride will be up, sometimes; but in the pull two ways, between that and mortification, a torn coat will be the consequence: and must not the *tatterdemalion* (What a new language will my uncle teach me!) then look simply?

You bid me ask my aunt—You bid me tell my uncle—Naughty Charlotte! I will ask, I will tell, them, nothing. Pray write me a letter next, that I can read to *them*. I skipt this passage—Read that—'um—'um—'um—Then skipt again—Hey-day!

What's come to the girl? cried my uncle: Can Lady G. write what Harriet cannot read? [There was a rebuke for you, Charlotte!] For the love of God, let me read it!—He bustled, laughed, shook his shoulders, rubbed his hands, at the imagination—Some pretty roguery, I warrant: dearly do I love Lady G. If you love me, Harriet, let *me* read; and once he snatched one of the sheets. I boldly struggled with him for it—For shame, Mr. Selby, said my aunt. My dear, said my grandmother, if your uncle is so impetuous, you must shew him no more of your letters.

He then gave it up—Consider, Charlotte, what a fine piece of work we should have had with my uncle, had he read it through!

But, let me see—What are the parts of this wicked letter, for which I can sincerely thank you? —O my dear, I cannot, cannot, without soiling my fingers, pick them out—Your intelligences, however, are among those which I hold for favours.

Poor Emily! that is a subject which delights, yet saddens, me—We are *laudably* fond of distinguishing merit. But your brother's is so dazzling—Every woman is one's rival. But no more of my Emily! Dear creature! the subject pains me—Yet I cannot quit it.—You ask, if, after all, I think it right that she should live with me?—What can I say? for *her* sake, perhaps, it will not: yet how is her heart set upon it! For my own sake, as there is no perfect happiness to be expected in this life, I could be content to bear a little pain, were that dear girl to be either benefited or pleasured by it. Indeed I love her, at my heart—And what is more—I love myself for so sincerely loving her.

In the wicked part of your letter, what you write of your aunt Eleanor—But I have no *patience* with you, sinner as you are against light, and better

knowledge! and derider of the infirmities, not of old maids, but of old age!—Don't you hope to live long, yourself? That worthy lady wears not spectacles, Charlotte, because she never was so *happy* as to be married. Wicked Charlotte! to owe such obligation to the generosity of good Lord G. for taking pity of you in time [Were you four or five-and-twenty when he honoured you with his hand at St. George's church?] and yet to treat him as you do, in more places than one, in this very letter!

But I will tell you what I will do with this same strange letter—I will transcribe all the good things in it. There are many which both delight and instruct; and some morning, before I dress for the day, I will [Sad task, Charlotte! But it shall be by way of penance for some of my faults and follies!] transcribe the intolerable passages; so make two letters of it. One I will keep to shew my friends here, in order to increase, if it be possible, their admiration of my Charlotte; the bad one I will present to you. I know I shall transcribe it in a violent hurry—Not much matter whether it be legible, or not.—The *hobbling* it will cause in the reading, will make it appear worse to you, than if you could read it as glibly as you write. If half of it *be* illegible, enough will be left to make you blush for the whole, and wonder what sort of a pen it was that somebody, unknown to you, put into your standish.

After all, spare me not, my ever-dear, my ever-charming friend! spare only your-*self*: don't let Charlotte run away from both G.'s. You will then be always equally sure of my admiration and love. For dearly do I love you, with all your faults; so dearly, that when I consider your faults by themselves, I am ready to arraign my heart, and to think there is more of the roguery of my Charlotte in it than I will allow of.

One punishment to you, I intend, my dear—In all my future letters, I will write as if I had never seen this your naughty one. Indeed I am in a kind of way, faulty or not, that I cannot get out of, all at once; but as soon as I can, I will, that I may better justify my displeasure at some parts of your letter, by the observance I will pay to others. That is a sweet sentence of my Charlotte's: 'Change your name, and increase your consequence.' Reflect, my dear; How naughty must you have been, that such a charming instance of goodness could not bribe to spare you

Your ever-affectionate and grateful

HARRIET BYRON!

LETTER XXIX.

MISS BYRON. IN CONTINUATION.

Selby-house, Tuesday morning, October 24.

Mr. Deane would not go back with us. He laid a strict charge upon me, at parting, not to be punctilious.

I am *not*, my dear Lady G. Do *you* think I am? The men are their own enemies, if they wish *us* to be open-hearted and sincere, and are not so *themselves.* Let them enable us to depend on their candour, as much as we may on that of Sir Charles Grandison, and the women will be inexcusable, who shall play either the prude or the coquet with them. You will say, I am very cunning, perhaps, to form at the same time a rule *from*, and an excuse *for*, my own conduct to this excellent man: but be that as it will, it is truth.

We sent our duty last night to Shirley-manor

and expect every moment the dear parent there with us.

She is come. I will go down; and if I get her by myself, or only with my aunt and Lucy, I will tell her a thousand thousand agreeable things, which have passed since last I had her tender blessing.

* *

We have had this Greville and this Fenwick here. I could very well have spared them. Miss Orme came hither also, uninvited, to breakfast; a favour she often does us. I knew not, at first, how to behave to Sir Charles before her: she looked so jealous of him! so cold! Under her bent brow she looked at him: Yes, and No, were all her answers, with an air *so* stiff!—But this reserve lasted not above a quarter of an hour. Sir Charles addressed himself to *me*, with so much respect; to *her*, with so polite a freedom; that she could not hold her shyness.

Her brow cleared up; her eyes looked larger, and more free. Her buttoned-up pretty mouth opened to a smile: she answered, she asked questions; gave her required opinion on more topics than one, and was *again* all Miss Orme.

Every-body took great notice of Sir Charles's fine address to her, and were charmed with him; for we all esteem Mr. Orme, and love his sister. How pleasant it was to see the sunshine break out in her amiable countenance, and the gloom vanishing, by degrees!

She took me out into the lesser parlour—What a strange variable creature am I! said she: How I hated this Sir Charles Grandison, before I saw him! I was vexed to find him, at first sight, answer what I had heard of him; for I was resolved to dislike him, though he had been an angel: But, ah, my poor brother!—I am afraid, that I myself shall be ready to give up his interest!—No wonder, my dear

Miss Byron, that nobody else would do, when you had seen this man!—But still, let me bespeak your pity for my brother.—Would to Heaven you had not gone to London!—What went you thither for?

Sir Charles kindly enquired of her after Mr. Orme's health; praised him for his character; wished his recovery; and to be allowed to cultivate the friendship of so worthy a man: and all this with an air so sincere!—But good men must love one another.

* *

Sir Charles has just now declared to my aunt, that he thinks of going up to town, or to Grandison-hall, I forget if they told me which, to-morrow or next day: perhaps he knows not *to which* himself. I was surprised. Perhaps he is tired with us. Let me recollect—*Thursday was se'nnight!* Why indeed he has been down with us twelve days!—No less!

But he has no doubts, no suspenses from *us*, to keep love awake: his path is plain and smooth before him. He had demanded his day: we think we cannot immediately, and after so short a time past since his declaring himself, give it him—And why should he lose his precious time among us? I suppose he will be so *good* as to hold himself in readiness to obey *our* summons—He expects a summons from *us*, perhaps!—

O my dear Lady G! am I not perverse? I believe I am. Yet where there is room, from past circumstances, to dread a slight, though none may be intended, and truly as I honour and revere Lady Clementina, my mind is not always great enough (perhaps from consciousness of demerit) to carry itself above apprehension and petulance, noble as is the man.

My uncle is a little down upon it; because, truly, my grandmamma has told him, that it is really too

early yet to fix the day; and he reverences, as every-body does, her judgment.

But why, he asks, cannot there be preparation making? Why may not something be seen *going forward?*

What! before the day is named? my aunt asks—As Harriet had desired to have his next letters arrive before she directly answered his question, she could *not* recede.

He went from them both greatly dissatisfied, and exclaiming against women's love of power, and never knowing how to make a right use of it.

A message from Sir Charles. He desires to attend me. I believe I shall be a little sullen: I know my heart: it is all his own; and I am *loth* to disoblige him—But he was far, far more attendant on Lady Clementina's motions: Don't you think so, Lady G.? But she was all excellence—Well—But hush!—I say no more!—

* *

I will give you an account of our conversation. I verily believe, that, had he not touched the poor snail with too hasty a finger, which made her shrink again into her shell, I might have been brought to name the week, though not the day.

But I will not anticipate.

He entered with a very polite and affectionate air. He enquired after my health, and said, I looked not well—Only *vexed;* thought I.

It is impossible, I believe, to hold displeasure in the presence of a beloved object, with whom we are not mortally offended. My dearest Miss Byron, said he, taking my passive hand, I am come to ask your advice on twenty subjects. In the first place, here is a letter from Lady G. recommending to me a house near her own [He gave it to me. I read it]. Should you, madam, approve of Grosvenor Square?

I was silent: you will guess how my captious folly appeared to him, by what he said to me. He respectfully took my hand—Why so solemn, dear madam? Why so silent? Has any-thing disturbed you? Some little displeasure seems to hang upon that open countenance. Not at me, I hope?

Yes it *is!* thought I. But I did not intend you should see it.—I cleared up; and, without answering his question, said, It is in the neighbourhood of Lady L. I hope?

Thank you, madam, for that *hope*—It is. Not far from your cousin Reeves's.

I can have no objection, Sir.

I will refer myself, on this subject, if you please, to my sisters, and Lord G. He values himself on his taste in houses and furniture, and will be delighted to be put into commission with my sisters on this occasion: or shall I stay till the happy day is over, and leave the choice wholly to yourself?

Lady G. Sir, seems pleased with the house. She writes, that there is somebody else about it. It may not, then, be to be had.

Shall I, then, commission her to take it directly?

What you please, Sir.

He bowed to me, and said, Then that matter is settled. And now, madam, let me own all my arts. You would penetrate into them, if I did not. You see, that the great question is never out of my view—I cannot but hope and believe, that you are above regarding *mere* punctilio.—Have you, my dearest Miss Byron, thought, can you think, of some early week, in which to fix my happy day?—Some preparation on your part, I presume, will be thought necessary: as to mine, were you to bless me with your hand next week, I should be aforehand in that particular.

I was silent. I was considering how to find some

middle way that should make non-compliance appear neither disobliging, nor affected.

He looked up at me with love and tenderness in his aspect; but, having no answer, proceeded:

Your uncle, madam, and Mr. Deane, will inform you, that the settlements are such as cannot be disapproved of. I expect every day some slight tokens of my affection for my dear Miss Byron, which will be adorned by the lovely wearer: I have not been so extravagant in them, as shall make her think I build on toys for her approbation. She will allow me to give her my notions on this subject. In the article of personal appearance, I think, that propriety and degree should be consulted, as well as fortune. *Our* degree, *our* fortune, madam, is not mean: but I, who always wished for the revival of sumptuary laws, have not sought, in this article, to emulate princes. In my own dress, I am generally a conformist to the fashion. Singularity is usually the indication of something wrong in judgment. I rather perhaps dress too shewy, though a young man, for one who builds nothing on outward appearance: but my father loved to be dressed. In matters which regard not morals, I choose to appear to his friends and tenants, as not doing discredit to his magnificent spirit*. I could not think it becoming, as those perhaps do, who have the direction of the royal stamp on the coin, to set my face the contrary way to that of my predecessor. In a word, all my father's steps, in which I could tread, I did; and have chosen rather to build upon, than demolish, his foundations—But how does my vanity mislead me! I *have* vanity, madam; I have pride, and some con-

* Miss Byron observes, Vol. I. Let. xxxvi. p. 272. that Sir Charles's dress and equipage are rather gay than plain. She little thought, at that time, that he had such a reason to give for it as he here suggests.

sequential failings, which I cannot always get above; but, anxious as I ever shall be for your approbation, my whole heart shall be open to you: and every motive, every spring of action, so far as I can trace it, be it to my advantage or not, shall be made known to you. Happy the day that I became acquainted with Dr. Bartlett! He will tell you, madam, that I am corrigible. You must perfect, by your sweet conversation, *un*-coupled with fear, what Dr. Bartlett has so happily begun; and I shall then be more worthy of you than at present I am.

O, Sir, you do me too much honour! You must be *my* monitor. As to the ornaments you speak of, I hope I shall always look upon simplicity of manners, a grateful return to the man I shall vow to honour, and a worthy behaviour to all around me, as my principal ornaments!

He bowed his face upon my hand, to hide, as I thought, his emotion. Excellent Miss Byron! said he: then, after a pause, Now let me say, that I have the happiness to find my humble application to you acceptable to every one of your friends. The only woman on earth, whom, besides yourself, I ever could have wished to call mine, and all her ever-to-be respected family, (pleading their *own* sakes) join their wishes in my favour; and, were you to desire it, would, I am sure, signify as much to you under their own hands. I know not whether I could so far have overcome my own scruples in behalf of your delicacy (placing myself, as persons always ought when they hope for favour, in the granter's place) as to supplicate you so *soon* as I have done, but at the earnest request of a family, and for the sake of a lady, I must ever hold dear. The world about you *expects* a speedy celebration. I have not, I own, been backward to *encourage* the expectation: it was impossible to conceal from it the motive of my coming down,

as my abode was at an inn. I came with an equipage, becaused my pride (How great is my pride!) permitted me not to own that I doubted. Have you, madam, a material objection to a nearly day? Be so good to inform me, if you have. I wish to remove every shadow of doubt from your heart.

I was silent. He proceeded:

Let me not pain you, madam!—lifting my hand to his lips—I would not pain you for the world. You have seen the unhappy Olivia: you have perhaps heard her story from herself. What must be the cause upon which self-partiality cannot put a gloss? Because I knew not how (It was shocking to my nature) to repulse a lady, she took my pity for encouragement. Pity from a *lady* of a man, is noble —The declaration of pity from a *man* for a woman, may be thought a vanity bordering upon insult. Of such a nature is *not* mine—She has some noble qualities—From my heart, for her character's sake, I pity Olivia; and the more, for that violence of temper which she never was taught to restrain. If, madam, you have any scruples on *her* account, own them: I will, for I honestly *can*, remove them.

O Sir! None! None!—Not the least, on that unhappy lady's account—

Let me say, proceeded he, that Olivia reveres you, and wishes you (I hope cordially, for she is afraid still of your sister-excellence) to be mine. Give me leave to boast (it *is* my boast), that though I have had pain from individuals of your sex, I can look back on my past life, and bless God that I never, from *childhood* to *manhood*, WILFULLY gave pain either to the MOTHERLY or SISTERLY heart*; nor from *manhood* to the *present hour*, to any other woman.

O Sir! Sir!—What is it you call *pain*, if at this

* See his mother's written acknowledgment to this purpose, Vol. II. p. 325.

instant (and I said it with tears) *that* which your goodness makes me feel, is not so?—The dear, the excellent Clementina! What a perverseness is in *her* fate! She, and she *only*, could have deserved you!

He bent his knee to the greatly-honoured Harriet—I acknowledge with transport, said he, the joy you give me by your magnanimity; such a *more* than sisterly magnanimity to that of Clementina. How nobly do you authorize my regard for *her*!—In *you*, madam, shall I have all *her* excellencies, without the abatements which must have been allowed, had she been mine, from considerations of religion and country. Believe me, madam, that my love of her, if I know my heart, is of such a nature, as never can abate the fervor of that I vow to you. To both of you, my principal attachment was to MIND: yet let me say, that the *personal* union, to which you discourage me not to aspire, and the *duties* of that most intimate of all connexions, will preserve *to you* the *due* preference; as (allow me to say) it would have done to *her*, had she accepted of my vows.

O Sir! believe me incapable of affectation, of petulance, of disguise! My heart (Why should I not speak freely to Sir Charles Grandison?) is wholly yours!—It never knew another lord! I will flatter myself, that, had you never known Lady Clementina, and had she not been a prior love, you never would have had a divided heart!—What pain must you have had in the conflict! My regard for you bids me acknowledge my own vanity, in my pity for you!

I gushed into tears—You must leave me, Sir—I cannot bear the exaltation you have given me!

I turned away my face: I thought I should have fainted.

He clasped me to his bosom: he put his cheek to mine: for a moment we neither of us could speak.

He broke the short silence. I dread the effects on your tender health, of the pain that I, or rather your own greatness of mind, gives you. Beloved of my heart! kissing my cheek, wet at that moment with the tears of both, forgive me!—And be assured, that reverence will *always* accompany my love. Will it be too much, just now, to re-urge the day that shall answer the wishes of Clementina, of her noble brothers, of all our own friends, and make you wholly mine?

His air was so noble; his eyes shewed so much awe, yet such manly dignity, that my heart gave way to its natural impulse—Why, Sir, should I not declare my reliance on your candour? My honour, in the world's eye, I entrust to you: but bid me not do an improper thing, lest my desire of obliging you should make me forget myself.

Was not this a generous resignation? Did it not deserve a generous return? But he, even Sir Charles Grandison, endeavoured to make his advantage of it, letters from Italy unreceived! as if he thought my reference to those a punctilio also.

What a deposit!—Your honour, madam, is safely entrusted. Can punctilio be honour?—It is but the shadow of it. What but *that* stands against your grant of an early day?—Do not think me misled by my impatience to call you mine, to take an undue advantage of your condescension. Is it not the happiness of *both* that I wish to confirm? And shall I suffer false delicacy, false gratitude, to take place of the true?—Allow me, madam—But you seem uneasy—I will prolong the time I had intended to beg you would permit me to limit you to. Let me request from you the choice of some one happy day, before the expiration of the next *fourteen*—

Consider, Sir!—

Nothing, madam, happening in my behaviour to cause you to revoke the generous trust: from *abroad* there cannot.

He looked to be in earnest in his request: Was it not *almost* an ungenerous return to my confidence in him? Twelve days only had elapsed since his personal declaration; the letters from Italy which he had allowed me to wait for, unreceived; Lady D. one of the most delicate-minded of women, knowing too my preferable regard for your brother? And must not the *hurry* have the worse appearance for *that?* No preparation yet thought of: my aunt thinking his former urgency, greatly as she honours him, rather *too* precipitating—My spirits, hurried before, were really affected. Do not call me a silly girl, dearest Lady G.: I endeavoured to speak; but, at the instant, could not distinctly.

I am sorry, madam, that what I have said has so much disturbed you. Surely, some one day in the fourteen—

Indeed, indeed, Sir, interrupted I, you have surprised me: I did not think you could have wished *so* to limit me—I did not expect—

What, loveliest of women! will you *allow* me to expect? The day is still at your own choice. Revoke not, however, the generous concession, till Mrs. Shirley, Mrs. Selby, and our Lucy, are consulted. Will you, dearest madam, be determined by them?

Say not, Sir, to any of them, after such an instance of my confidence in you—for the honour of your accustomed generosity, say it not—that you could so limit me; and I will endeavour to forget it.

Consider, my dearest Miss Byron—

I believe my grandmamma is come, said I—

They are all goodness: they will indulge me. I

will tell you, madam, taking my hand, and seating me, what is my intention, if you approve of it. All the country suppose that my application for your favour meets with encouragement: they expect, as I have told you, a speedy solemnization. I took my lodgings at some little distance from you, at a place of public entertainment; perhaps (pardon me, madam, for the sake of my ingenuousness) with some view, that the general talk [See, Lady G.! it is well he is a good man!] would help to accelerate my happy day: but, madam, to continue my daily visits from thence, when my happiness is supposed to be near, will not perhaps *look* so well [We *are to be* studious of *looks*, it seems]—Indeed I would not be thought to despise the world's opinion: the world, when it will have patience to stay till it is master of facts, is not always wrong: it can judge of others, better than it can act itself—The change of my lodgings to others in this house, or in Shirley-manor, will not perhaps be allowed till I am blessed with the hand of the dearest relation of both: I therefore think of going up to town, *declaredly* (Why not?) to prepare for our nuptials; and to return near the time agreed upon for the happy celebration. Then will either this house, or Shirley-manor, be allowed to receive the happiest of men.

He stopt: I was silent. He proceeded, looking tenderly, yet smilingly, in my downcast face, still holding my hand:—And now, dearer to me than life, let me ask you—Can you think it an unpardonable intrusion on your condescending goodness, that I make the time of my return to my Miss Byron not over-tedious?—Fourteen days, were you to go to the extent of them, would be an age to me, who have been for so many days past as happy as a man in expectation can be. I do assure you, madam,

that I could not have had the insolence to make you a request, which I rather expected to be forgiven, than complied with. I thought myself not ungenerous to the confidence you reposed in me, that I gave you *so much* time. I thought of a *week*, and began apologizing, lest you should think it too short; but, when I saw you disturbed, I concluded with the mention of a *fortnight*. My dearest creature, think me not unreasonable in my expectations of your compliance—

What, Sir! in a fortnight?—

As to preparations, madam, you know the pleasure my sisters will have in executing any commissions you will favour them with on so joyful an occasion. Charlotte had not *so much* time for preparation. But were *not* every-thing to be in readiness by the chosen day, there will be time enough for all you wish, before you would perhaps choose to see company—Consider, my dearest life, that if you regard punctilio merely; punctilo has no determinate end: punctilio begets punctilio. You may not half a year hence imagine *that* to be sufficiently gratified. And allow me to say, that I cannot give up my hope till your grandmamma and aunt decide that I ought.

How, Sir!—And can you thus adhere?—But I will allow of your *reference*—

And be determined by their advice, madam?

But I will not trust you, Sir, with pleading your own cause.

Are you not arbitrary, madam?

In this point, if I am, ought I *not* to be so?

Yes, if you will *resume* a power you had so generously resigned.

May I not, Sir, when I think it over-strained in the hands of the person to whom, in better hopes, it was delegated?

That, dear lady, is the point to be tried. You consent to refer the merits of it to your grand-mamma and aunt?

If I *do*, Sir, you ought not to call me *arbitrary*.

It is gracious, bowing, in my sovereign lady, to submit her absolute will and pleasure to arbitration.

Very well, Sir!—But will you not submit to *my own* award?

Tell me, dear Miss Byron, tell me, if I do, how generous will you be?

I was far from intending—

Was, madam—I hope I may dwell upon that word, and repeat my question?

Am, Sir. I *am* far from intending—

No more, dear madam. I appeal to another tribunal.

Well, Sir, I will endeavour to recollect the substance of this conversation, and lay it, in writing, before the judges you have named. Lucy shall be a third.

You will permit me, madam, to see your state of the case, before you lay it before the judges?

No, Sir. None but they must see it, till it makes part of a letter to Lady G. who then shall shew it only to Lady L.

It is the harder to be thus prescribed to, my dear Miss Byron, because—

What, Sir, in my day?—

That was what I was going to urge, because *mine* will never come. Every day, to the end of my life, will be yours [Dear man!]—Only, Sir, as I *deserve* your kindness: I wish not for it on other terms. And you shall be then sole judge of my deserts. *I* will not appeal to any other tribunal.

He gracefully bowed. I think, said he, smiling, I must withdraw my intended appeal: I am half-afraid

of my judges; and perhaps ought to rely wholly on your goodness.

No, no, Sir! Your *intention* is your *act*. In *that* sense you have appealed to Cæsar*.

I never before was in love with despotism. You mention writing to my sisters: you correspond with them, I presume, as you formerly did with *our* Lucy. Let me tell you, madam, that you had not been *Miss Byron*, FOURTEEN days after I was favoured with the sight of those letters, had I been at liberty to offer you my heart, and could I have prevailed on you to accept it. Your distress, your noble frankness of heart—

And let me own, Sir, as an instance of the frankness you are pleased to encourage, that gratitude for the deliverance you so nobly gave me, had as much power over *my* heart, as the openness of mine, and my distress, could have over *yours*.

Sweet excellence!—Complete your generous goodness to a grateful heart; it *is* a grateful one; and shorten the days of your *single* power, in order to enlarge it!

Lucy appeared; but seeing us engaged in conversation, was about to retire: but he, stepping to her, and taking both her hands—OUR Lucy, obligingly, said he, you must come in—You are to be one judge of three in a certain cause, that will come before you—And I hope—

No prejudgings, Sir Charles, said I—You are not to plead at all—

Yet deeply interested in the event, Miss Selby! said he.

A bad sign, cousin Byron! said Lucy. I begin already to doubt the justice of your cause.

* Alluding to Festus's answer to St. Paul, Acts xxv. 12.

When you hear it, Lucy, make, as you usually do, the golden rule yours, and I have nothing to fear.

I tell you, before-hand, I am inclined to favour Sir Charles. No three judges can be found, but will, believe, from his character, that *he* cannot be wrong.

But from mine, that *I* may!—O my Lucy! I did not expect this from my cousin. You must not, I think, be one of my judges.

* *

To this place, I have shewn my three judges. The following is their determination, drawn up by the dear lady president, my grandmamma:

SIR CHARLES GRANDISON, AGAINST HARRIET BYRON. ET E CONTRA.

We, the underwritten, do find, upon the case laid before us by the said Harriet, that, in the whole conversation between the said Sir Charles and her, she has behaved herself with that true virgin delicacy, yet with that laudable unreservedness, that might be expected from *her* character, and *his* merits. We think, the gentleman has the advantage of the lady in the arguments for the early day contended for; and, if she had defended herself by little artifices and disguises, we should have had no scruple to decide against her: but as she has shewn, throughout the conversation, noble instances of generosity, trust reposed, and even acknowledged affection; we recommend to them both a compromise.

We allow, therefore, Sir Charles Grandison to pursue his intentions of going up to town, *declaredly* to prepare for the happy day; and recommend it to Harriet, in consideration of the merits of the requester (who lays his whole heart open before her, in a manner too generous not to meet with a

like return) to fix as early a day as in prudence she can.

For the rest, May the Almighty shower down his blessings on both! May all their contentions, like this, be those of love, and true delicacy! May they live together many, very many, happy years, an example of conjugal felicity! And may their exemplary virtues meet with an everlasting reward!—So prays, so subscribes,

HENRIETTA SHIRLEY.
MARIANNE SELBY.
LUCY SELBY.

To-morrow morning, when Sir Charles comes to breakfast, this paper will be presented to him by my grandmamma.

I wonder whether Sir Charles writes to Dr. Bartlett an account of what passes here. If he does, what would I give to see his letters! and, particularly, what he thinks of the little delays he meets with! But do, dear Lady G. acquit me of affectation and parade. Indeed it is not *that*. I hope he himself acquits me, and censures himself; for, upon my word, he is unreasonably hasty.

I could not but express a little curiosity about his hint of Lady Olivia's favourable opinion of me, though not at the time; and he was so good as to shew me, and my grandmamma and aunt, a most extraordinary character which she gave me in a long letter*. I *saw* it was a long letter: I was very *Eve-ish*, my dear. Lucy said afterwards, that I did *so leer* at it: an ugly word, importing *sliness;* and, after I was angry at myself for giving her the idea that put her upon applying it, I chid her for using it.

Lady Olivia writes such high things, my dear! I blushed—I did not, could not, deserve them. I al-

* See Vol. V.

ways pitied her, you know; but now you cannot imagine how much more than ever I pitied her. Do all of us, *indeed*, as the men say, love flattery?—I did not think I did—I shall find out all the *obliquities* of my heart, in time. I was supposed once to be so *good* a creature—as if none other were half so good! —Ah, my partial friends! you studied your Harriet in the dark; but here comes the sun darting into all the crooked and obscure corners of my heart; and I shrink from his dazzling eye; and, compared to him (and *Clementina*, let me add) appear to myself *such* a nothing—

Nay, I have had the mortification, once or twice, to think myself less than the very Olivia, upon whom, but lately, secure of my mind's superiority to her mind, I looked down with a kind of proud compassion: And whence this exaltation of Olivia, and self-humiliation?—Why, from her magnifying beyond measure the poor Harriet, and yielding up her own hopes, entreating him, as she does, to address me; and that with such honourable distinction, as if my acceptance of him were doubtful, and a condescension.

I wish I could procure you a copy of what your brother read to me—Ah, my dear! It is very soothing to my pride!—But what is the *foundation* of that pride? Is it not my ambition to be thought worthily of by the best of men? And does not praise stimulate me to resolve to *deserve* praise? I will *endeavour* to deserve it. But, my dear, this Olivia, a fine figure herself, and loving in spite of discouragement, can praise, to the object of her love, the *person*, and still more, the *mind*, of her rival?—Is not that great in Olivia? Could I be so great, if I thought myself in danger from *her!*

LETTER XXX.

MISS BYRON. IN CONTINUATION.

Selby-house, Wednesday, October 25.

Sir Charles came not this morning till we were all assembled for breakfast. I had begun to think, whether, if I had been Sir Charles, and he had been Miss Byron, I would not have been here an hour before, expecting the decision of the judges to whom a certain cause was referred. O my dear Lady G.! how narrow-minded I am, with all my quondam heroism! The knowledge of his past engagements with the excellent Clementina, and of his earnest wishes then to be hers, makes me, on every occasion that can be tortured into an appearance of neglect or coldness, *so* silly!—Indeed I am ashamed of myself. But all my petulance was dispelled, the instant he shone upon us.

Well, my dear ladies, said he, the moment he took his place, whisperingly to my grandmamma, Is sentence given?

It is, Sir Charles—He took my hand, cross my Nancy's lap, as she sat between him and me—I have hopes, my dear Miss Byron [from the foolishness in my looks, I suppose] that you are *cast*.

Have patience, Sir, said I—It is well that the best of us are not always to be our own carvers.

He looked, Lucy said afterwards, with eyes of love upon me, and of apprehension on his judges; and the discourse turned upon indifferent subjects.

I retired as soon as breakfast was over; and he demanded his sentence.

My uncle was, as he called it, *turned out of door* before my grandmamma gave your brother the paper.

Sir Charles read it—You are not serious upon it, Sir Charles? said my grandmamma.—I am infinitely obliged to you, ladies, replied he. I love to argue with my dear Miss Byron: I must attend her, this moment.

He sent up Sally before him, and came up. I was in my closet; and scrupled not to admit him.

Henceforth, my dearest dear Miss Byron, said he, the moment he approached me (as I stood up to receive him) I salute you undoubtedly mine—And he saluted me with ardor—I knew not which way to look—So *polite* a lover, as I thought him!—Yet never man was so gracefully free!—It remains now, madam, proceeded he, still holding my hand, to put to trial your goodness to me [You have done that already, thought I!] in the great question, by which I am to conduct myself for the next week, or ten days.

Week or *ten days!* thought I. Surely, Sir, you are an encroacher.

You see, Sir, said I, when a little recovered, what judges who, on such points as these, cannot err, have determined.

Yes, they *can*, interrupted he: as *ladies*, they are parties—But I submit. Their judgment must be a law to me—I will go up to town, as they advise. I cannot, however, be long absent from you. When I return, I will not put up at a public place. Either your uncle, or your grandmother, must allow me to be their guest. This will oblige you, I hope, even for *dear* punctilio sake, to honour me with your hand very soon after my return.

He paused: I was silent. His first address had put me out. Remember, madam, I said, resumed he, that I cannot be long absent: you are above being governed by mere punctilio. Add to the obligations your generous acceptance of me has laid me

under—Why sighs my angel? [It was, my dear Lady G. an involuntary sigh!]—For the world, I would not give you either sensible or lasting pain. But if the same circumstances would make your nomination of a day as painful to you, some time hence, as now, then bless me with as early a day as you CAN give me, to express myself in the words of my judges.

This, Sir, said I (but I hesitated, and looked down) is one of the solemn points which precede one of the most solemn circumstances of my life. You seem more in earnest for an early day than I could have expected. When I have declared that affectation has no part in the more distant compliance, I may be allowed, by the nicest of my own sex, to lay open to a man so generous, though so precipitating, my whole heart. Indeed, Sir, it is wholly yours—I blushed, as I felt, and turned away my face. It *was* a free declaration: but I was resolved to banish affectation. He bowed profoundly on my hand, and kissed it. Gratitude looked out in his eyes, and appeared in his graceful manner, though attentively silent.

You were my deliverer, proceeded I. An esteem founded on gratitude, the object so meritorious, ought to set me above mere forms—Our judges say, that you have the advantage in the argument—

I will lay no stress, madam, on this part of their judgment in my favour—To your goodness, and to that so nobly acknowledged esteem, I wholly refer myself.

I think myself, proceeded I, that you have the advantage in the argument—All that is in my power, I would wish to do, to oblige you—

Condescending goodness!—Again he kissed my hand.

Do you think, Sir—

Why hesitates my love?

Do you think, six weeks—

Six ages, my dearest, dearest creature?—Six weeks! For Heaven's sake, madam—He looked, he spoke, impatience.

What can a woman, who has owned your title to *expect* to be obliged, say?—Let me, at least, ask (and I unaffectedly hesitated) a *month*, Sir—from this day —And that you will acknowledge yourself not perversely or weakly treated.

He dropt on one knee, and kissing my hand with rapture, *Within* the month, then, I hope—I cannot live a month from you—Allow me to return in the first fortnight of the month—

O Sir! and take up your residence with us, on your return?

Undoubtedly, madam.—Consider, Sir—Do you also, dearest madam, consider; and banish me not from you for so very long a time.

My heart *wanted*, I thought, to oblige him; but to allow him to return sooner, as he was to take up his abode with us, what was that, but, in effect, complying with his first proposal?

Permit me, Sir, to retire. Indeed you are too urgent.

He asked my excuse; but declared, that he would not give up his humble plea (*humble* he *called* it) unless my grandmamma and aunt told him, that he ought.

On his leaving me to return to company below, he presented me with four little boxes. Accept, my beloved Miss Byron, said he, of these trifles. I received them not till this morning. I oblige *myself* by the tender, and I comply with custom, which I am fond of doing, whenever I can innocently do it. But I know, that you, my dear Miss Byron, value the heart more than a thousand times the value of these

—Mine, madam, is yours, and will be yours to the end of my life.

What could I say?—My heart, on recollection, reproaches me for my ungrateful acceptance. I courtesied. I was silly. Sir Charles Grandison only can be present to every occasion.

He *looked* as if my *not* refusing them was a favour more than equivalent to the value of the presents. My dearest life, said he, on my putting them on my toilette, how much you oblige me!—Shall I conduct you to our friends below? Will you acquaint your grandmamma and aunt with our debate, and my bold expectation?

I stood still. He took my hand, pressed it with his lips, and, with a reverence more than usually profound, as if he had *received* instead of *conferred* a favour, withdrew. Never was a present so gracefully made! I cannot describe the grace with which he made it.

My uncle, it seems, as soon as he went down, asked him, How we had settled the great affair? My grandmamma and aunt in a breath asked him, If their Harriet had been good?—or, as good as he expected?

Miss Byron, said he, has taken more time than I could have wished she had. A month, she talks of.

Has she complied so far? said my grandmamma: I am glad of it. I was afraid she would have insisted upon more time—

So was I, said my aunt. But who can withstand Sir Charles Grandison? Has the dear girl given you the *very* day, Sir?

No, madam. If she had, I should have hoped it would have been considerably *within* the month. As yet, ladies, I hope it will.

Nay, Sir Charles, if you are not pleased with a month, said my aunt—Hush, dear ladies!—Here

comes the angel.—Not a word, I beseech you, on that side of the question—She will think, if you applaud her, that she has consented to too short a term—You must not make her uneasy with herself.

Does not this look as if he imagined there was *room* for me to be so?—I *almost* wish—I don't know what I wish; except I could think but half so well of myself as I do of him: for then should I look forward with less pain in my joy than now too often mingles with it.

Your brother excused himself from dining with us: that Greville has engaged him. Why would he permit himself to be engaged by him? Greville cannot love him: he can only admire him, and that everybody does, who has been but once in his company. Miss Orme, even Miss Orme, is in love with him. I received a note from her while your brother was with us. These are the contents:

DEAR MISS BYRON,

I am in love with your young baronet. It is well that your beauty and your merit secure you, and make every other woman hopeless. To see and know Miss Byron, is half the cure, unless a woman were presumption itself. O my poor brother!—But will you let me expect you, and as many of the dear family as you can bring, at breakfast to-morrow morning?—Sir Charles Grandison, of course. Shew your own obligingness to me, and your power over him, at the same time. Your cousin Holles's will be with me, and three sister-toasts of York; besides *that* Miss Clarkson of whose beauty and agreeableness you have heard me talk. They long to see you. You *may* come. Poor things! how will they be mortified! If any one of them can allow herself to be less lovely than the others, she will be least affected by your superiority. But let me tell you, that Miss Clarkson,

had she the intelligence in her eyes that Somebody else has, and the dignity with the ease, would be as charming a young woman. But we are all prepared, I to love, they to admire, your gentleman. Pray, pray, my dear, bring him, or the disappointment will kill your

KITTY ORME.

Lucy, acquainting Sir Charles with the invitation, asked him, if he would oblige Miss Orme. He was at our command, he said—So we shall breakfast to-morrow at *the Park*.

But I am vexed at his dining from us to-day. So little time to stay with us! I wish him to be *complaisant* to Mr. Greville; but need he be so *very* obliging? There are plots laying for his company all over the county. We are told, there is to be a numerous assembly, all of gentlemen, at Mr. Greville's. Mr. Greville humorously declares, that he hates all women, for the sake of one.

* *

We have just opened the boxes. O my dear Lady G.! your brother is either very proud, or his fortune is very high! Does he not say, that he always consults fortune, as well as degree, in matters of outward appearance? He has not, in these presents, I am sure, consulted either the fortune or degree of your Harriet—Of your *happy* Harriet, I had like to have written: but the word *happy*, in this place, would have looked as if I thought these jewels an addition to my happiness.

How does his bounty insult me, on my narrow fortune!—Narrow, unless he submit to accept of the offered contributions of my friends—

Contributions!—Proud Harriet, how art thou, even in thy exaltations, humbled!—*Trifles*, he called them: the very ornamenting one's self with such

toys, may, in his eye, be thought trifling, though he is not above complying with the fashion, in things indifferent: but, the cost and beauty of these jewels considered, they are *not* trifles. The jewel of jewels, however, is his heart! How would the noble Clementina—Hah, *pen! Heart*, rather, Why, just now, this check of *Clementina?*—I *know* why—Not from want of admiration of her; but when I am allowing my heart to open, then does—Something *here*, in my inmost bosom [Is it conscience?] strike me, as if it said, Ah, Harriet!—Triumph not; rejoice not! Check the overflowings of thy grateful heart!—Art thou not an invader of another's right?

LETTER XXXI.

MISS BYRON. IN CONTINUATION.

Thursday morning, October 26.

I WILL hurry off a few lines. I am always ready before these fiddling girls: Lucy and Nancy, I mean. Never tedious, but in dressing! They will over-do the morning appearance. I could beat them. So well acquainted with propriety as they are; and knowing the beauty of elegant negligence. Were I not afraid of Lucy's repartee; and that she would say I was laying out for a compliment; I would tell them, they had a mind to try to eclipse Miss Clarkson, and the Yorkshire ladies. Your brother *supped*, as well as dined, at that Greville's. Fie upon him! I did not think he had so little command of himself!—Vain Harriet! Perhaps he *chose* to be rather *there* than *here*, for *novelty*-sake. I shall be saucy, by-and-by. He is below, strongly engaged in talk with my aunt—About *me*, I suppose: Ay, to be sure! methinks your

ladyship says. He can talk of nobody else!—Well, and what if one would wish he *could* not? [*What are these girls about?*] No less than one-and-twenty gentlemen at Greville's, besides the prince of them all. They all were ready to worship him. Fenwick looked in just now, and tells us so. He says, that your brother was the liveliest man in the company. He led the mirth, he says, and visibly exerted himself the more, finding the turn of the conversation likely to be what might be expected from such a company of all men. Wretches! Can twenty of them, when met, be tolerable creatures, not a woman among them, to soften their manners, and give politeness to their conversation?—Fenwick says, they engaged him at one time into talk of different regions, customs, usages. He was master of every subject. Half a score mouths were open at once whenever he spoke, as if distended with *gags*, was his word; and every one's eyes broader than ever they were observed to be before. Fenwick has humour; a little: not much; only by accident. So unlike *himself* at times, that he may pass for a different man. His aping Greville, helps his oddness.—How I ramble! You'll think I am aping my dear Lady G.—[*O these girls!*]—I think time lost when I am not writing to you. You cannot imagine what a thief I am to my company. I steal away myself, and get down, before I am missed, half a score times in a couple of hours. Sir Charles sung to the wretches: they all sung, they encored him without mercy.—He talks of setting out for town on Saturday, early. Lord bless me! What shall I do when he is gone?—Do you think *I* say this? If I *do*, I am kept in countenance: every-body says so, as well as I—But ah! Lady G. he has invited all the gentlemen, the whole twenty-one, and my cousin James, and my uncle, to dine with him at his inn,

to-morrow!—*Inn!* Nasty inn! Why did we let him go thither?—I am afraid he is a reveller. Can he be so *very* good a man? O yes, yes, yes! wicked Harriet! What is in thy heart, to doubt it? A fine reflection upon the age; as if there could not be *one* good man in it! and as if a good man could not be a man of vivacity and spirit! from whom can spirits, can cheerfulness, can debonnairness, be expected, if not from a *good* man?—I will shew these girls, by the quantity I have written, how they have made me wait. Prating, I suppose, to my Sally, about Sir Charles: they can talk of nobody else.

Ready! Yes, you dear creatures! So you ought to have been a leaf and half of my writing ago!—Adieu, Lady G. till our return from Miss Orme's.

Thursday noon.

Just come back from Miss Orme's. Sir Charles and my grandmamma are now got together, in serious talk. I know I was the subject, by the dear parent's looking often smiling upon me, as I sat at distance, and by his eye (taking the reference, as I may call it, of hers) turned as often towards me; so I stole up to my pen.

We were very politely treated by Miss Orme. Miss Clarkson is a charming young lady. The three Yorkshire sisters are lovely women. Sir Charles has told us, that mere beauty attracts only his eye, as fine flowers do in a gay parterre. I don't know *that*, my dear: that's the *philosophical* description of himself. The *same* men and women are not always the *same* persons. The ladies, one and all, when his back was turned, declared, that he was the gallantest man they ever were in company with. He said the easiest, politest things they ever heard spoken.—They never were in his company *before*: they might else have heard *as* fine. Such

dignity they observed (so does every-body), yet so much ease, in all he said, as well as in his own behaviour—*Born* to be a public man, would his pride permit him to aim at being so!—Not a syllable, however, but what might be said to each with the strictest truth. Sir Charles Grandison [it is Lucy's observation, as well as mine] addresses himself to women, *as* women, not as goddesses; yet does honour to the persons, and to the sex. Other men, not knowing what better to say, make angels of them, all at once. The highest things are ever said by men of the lowest understandings; and, their bolts once shot, the poor souls can go no further. So silly!—Has not your ladyship some of these in your eye, who make out the rest, by grinning in our faces, in order to convince us of their *sincerity*? Complimental men don't consider, that if the women they egregiously flatter were what they would have them believe they think them, they would not be seen in such company.

But what do you think the elder sister of the three said of your brother?—She was sure, those eyes, and that vivacity and politeness, were not given him for nothing. *Given him for nothing!* What a phrase is that! In short, she said, that *practice* had improved his natural advantages. *This* I have a good mind to say of *her*—Either she has not charity, or her heart has paid for enabling its mistress to make such an observation. *Practice!* What meant she by the word? —Indeed your brother was not quite so *abstractedly* inattentive, *I* thought, to the beauty of Miss Clarkson, but he might give some *little shadow* of ground for observation to a censorious person.

I sometimes think, that, free and open as his eyes are, his character might suffer, if one were to judge of his heart by them. Lord L. I remember, once said, that ladies abroad used to look upon him as

their own man, the moment they beheld him.—Innocently so, no doubt, and in their conversation-assemblies. Poor Lady Olivia, I suppose, was so caught! at an unhappy moment, perhaps, when her caution was half asleep, and she was loth to have it too rudely awakened. But ought I, your Harriet, to talk of this?—Where was *my* caution, when I suffered *myself* to be surprised?—O but my *gratitude* was my excuse. Who knows what Olivia might have to plead?—We have not her whole story, you know. Poor lady, I pity her! To cross the seas, as she did!—Ineffectually!

But can you bear this pen-prattling; the effects of a mind more at ease than it ever expected to be!

I will go down. *Can* I be so long spared? I am just thinking, that were I one of the creatures called coquettes, the best way to attract attention, when it grew languid, is to do as I do from zeal in writing to you—Be always going out and returning, and not staying long enough in a place to tire one's company, or suffer them to turn their eyes upon any body else. Did *you* ever try such an experiment, Charlotte? But you never *could* tire your company. Yet I think you have a spice of that character in yours. Don't you think so, yourself?—But don't own it, if you do—Hey-day! What's the matter with me! I believe by my flippancy I am growing quite well, and as saucy as I used to be—Poor Lady Clementina! I wish she were happy! Then should I be so.

* *

My dear Lady G. we had a charming conversation this day: my grandmamma and your brother bore the principal parts in it. It began with dress, and fashion, and such-like trifling objects; but ended in the noblest. You know my grandmamma's cheerful piety. Sir Charles seemed at first only designing to

attend to her wisdom; but she drew him in. O my dear! he seems to be, yet not to know it, as good a man, as she is a woman! Yet years so different!—But austerity, uncharitableness, on one hand; ostentation, affectation, on the other; these are qualities which can have no place in his heart. Such a glorious benevolence!—Such enlarged sentiments!—What a happy, thrice happy woman, thought I, several times, must she be, who shall be considered as a partaker of his goodness! Who shall be blest not only *in* him, but *for* him; and be his, and he hers, to all eternity!

My aunt once, in the conclusion of this conversation, said, How happy would it be, if he could reform certain gentlemen of this neighbourhood! And as they were so fond of his company, she hoped he would attempt it.

Example, he answered, and a *silent* one, would do more with such men than *precept*. *They have Moses, and the prophets.* They know when they do wrong, and what is right. They would be afraid of, and affronted at, a man pretending to instruct them. Decency, from such men, is as much as can be expected. We live in such an age, added he, that I believe more good may be done by seeming to relax a little, than by strictness of behaviour. Yet I admire those, who, from a full persuasion of their duty, do *not* relax; and the more, if they have got above moroseness, austerity, and uncharitableness.

After dinner, Mr. Milbourne, a very good man, minister of a dissenting congregation in our neighbourhood, accompanied by Dr. Curtis, called in upon us. They are good friends; made so by the mediation of my grandmamma, some years ago, when they did *not* so well understand each other. Dr. Curtis had been with us more than once, since Sir Charles was our visiter. He greatly admires him, you need

not doubt. It was beautiful, after compliments had passed between Sir Charles and the gentlemen, to see the *modest man* shine out in your brother's behaviour. Indeed he was free and easy, but attentive, as expecting entertainment and instruction from *them*; and leading *each* of them to give it in his own way.

They staid but a little while; and when they were gone, Sir Charles said, He wanted no other proof of their being good men, than they gave by their charity, and friendship to each other. My uncle, who, you know, is a zealous man *for the church*, speaking a little severely of persons whom he called *schismatics*; O Mr. Selby! said Sir Charles, let us be afraid of prescribing to tender consciences. You and I, who have been abroad, in countries where they account us *worse* than schismatics, would have been loth to have been prescribed to or compelled, in articles for which we ourselves are only answerable to the common Father of us all!

I believe in my conscience, Sir Charles, replied my uncle, if the truth were known, you are of the mind of that king of Egypt, who said, He looked upon the diversity of religions in his kingdom with as much pleasure as he did on the diversity of flowers in his garden.

I remember not the name of that king of Egypt, Mr. Selby; but I am *not* of his mind. I should not, if I were a king, take *pleasure* in such a diversity; but as the *examples* of kings are of great force, I would, by making my own as faultless as I could, let my people see the excellence of my persuasion, and my uniform practical adherence to it; instead of discouraging erroneous ones by unjustifiable severity. Religious zeal is generally a fiery thing: I would as soon quarrel with a man for his face, as for his religion. A good man, if not over-heated by

zeal, *will be* a good man, whatever be his faith; and should always be intitled to our esteem, as he is to our good offices, as a fellow-creature.

The *methodists*, Sir Charles; What think you of the *methodists!* Say you love 'em; and, and, and, adds-dines, you shall not be my nephew.

You now, my dear Mr. Selby, make me afraid of you. You throw out a menace, the *only* one you could perhaps think of, that would make me temporize.

You need not, you need not, be afraid, Sir Charles! said my uncle, laughing. What say *you*, Harriet? *Need* he? Hay? looking in my downcast face. Why speak you not, *lovely love?* Need Sir Charles, if he *had* disobliged *me*, to have been *afraid?*—Hay?

Dear Sir! you have not of a long time been so—

So, *what*, Harriet? So, *what*, dearest?—looking me quite down.

Fie, Mr. Selby! said my grandmamma.

Sir Charles, stepping to me, very gallantly took my hand—O Mr. Selby, you are not kind, said he: but allow me to make my advantage of your unkindness. My dear Miss Byron, let you and me withdraw; in compassion to Mr. Selby, let us withdraw: we will not hear him chidden, as I see the ladies think he ought to be.

And he hurried me off. The surprise made me appear more reluctant than I was in my heart.

Every one was pleased with his air and manner; and by this means he relieved himself from subjects with which he seemed not delighted, and obtained an opportunity to get me to himself.

Here had he stopt, he would have been welcome: but hurrying me into the cedar parlour; I am jealous, my love, said he; putting his arm round me; You seemed loth to retire with me. Forgive me: but thus I punish you, whenever you give me cause:

and, dear Lady G. he downright kissed me—My lip; and not my cheek—and in so fervent a way—I tell you every-thing, my Charlotte—I could have been angry—had I known *how*, from surprise. Before I could recollect myself, he withdrew his arm; and, resuming his usual respectful air, it would have made me look affected, had I then taken notice of it. But I don't remember any instance of the like freedom used to Lady Clementina.

My *lovely love*, said he, to express myself in your uncle's stile, which is that of my heart, tell me, Can you have pity for a poor man, when he is miserable, who, on a certain occasion, shewed *you* none? See what a letter Sir Hargrave Pollexfen has written to Dr. Bartlett; who asks my advice about attending him.

I obtained leave to communicate it to you, my dear Lady L. and Lady G. Be pleased to return it to me. I presume, you will read it here.

DEAR DR. BARTLETT,

Can your company be dispensed with by the best of men, for one, two, three days?—I have not had a happy hour since I saw you and Sir Charles Grandison at my house on the forest. All is gloom and horror in my mind: my despondency is, must be, of the blackest kind. It is blacker than remorse: it is all repining; but no repentance: I cannot, cannot, repent. Lord God of Heaven and Earth, what a wretch am I! with such a fortune; such estates; I am rich as Crœsus, yet more miserable than the wretch that begs his bread from door to door; and who oftener meets repulses, than relief. What a glorious choice has your patron made! Youth unbroken; conscience his friend; he cannot know an enemy. O that I had lived the life of your patron! I cannot see a creature who does not extol him.

My wine-merchant's name is Danby—Good God! What stories does he tell of him! Lord Jesus! What a heart must he have, that would permit him to do such things as Danby reports of him, of his own knowledge! While I—As young a man as himself, for what I know—With powers to do good, as great, perhaps greater than his own.—Lord! Lord! Lord! what a hand have I made of it, for the last three or four years of my life! who might have reached threescore-and-ten with comfort! whereas now, at twenty-eight, I am on the very brink of the grave. It appears to me as ready dug: it yawns for me: I am neither fit to die, nor to live. My days are dreadful: my nights are worse: my bed is a bed of nettles, and not of down. Not one comfortable thought, not one good action, to revolve, in which I had not some vile gratification to promote!—Wretched man! It is come home to me with a vengeance.

You prayed by me: you prayed for me. I have not been so happy since—Come and make me easy—happy I can never be, in this world—For pity, for charity sake, come and teach me how to bear life, or how to prepare for its cessation. And if Sir Charles Grandison would make me one more visit, would personally join in prayer with you and me, a glimpse of comfort would once more dart in upon my mind.

Try your interest with him, my dear Sir, in my behalf; and come together. Where is he?—The great God of Heaven and Earth prosper to him all his wishes, be he where he will, and be they what they will. Every-body will find their account in his prosperity. But I!—what use have I made of the prosperity given me?—Merceda gone to his account: Bagenhall undone: Jordan shunning me! Narrow-souled Jordan! He is reformed; but, not able to divide the *man* from the *crime*, he thinks he

cannot be in earnest, but by hating both. God help me! I cannot, now, if I would, give him a bad example! He need not be afraid of my staggering him in his good purposes.

One favour, for God's sake, procure for me—It is, that the man whose life once I sought, and thought myself justified by the provocation; who afterwards saved mine, for a *time* saved it, reserved as I was for pains, for sufferings, in mind and body, worse than death—That *this* man will be the executor of my last will. I have not a friend left. My relations are hungering and watching for my death, as birds of prey over a field of battle. My next heirs are my worst enemies, and most hated by me. Dear Sir Charles Grandison, my deliverer, my preserver, from those bloody Frenchmen, if you are the good man I think you, complete your kindness to him whom you have preserved; and say, you will be his executor. I *will* (because I *must*) do justice to the pretensions of those who will rejoice over my remains; and I will leave you a discretionary power, in articles wherein you may think I have shewn hatred. For justice-sake, then, be my executor. And do you, good Bartlett, put me in the way of repentance; and I shall then be happy. Draw me up, dear Sir, a prayer, that shall include confession. You cannot suppose me too bad a man, in a christian sense. Thank God, I am a Christian in belief, though I have been a devil in practice. You are a heavenly-minded man; give me words which may go to my heart; and tell me what I shall say to my God.

Tell Sir Charles Grandison, that he *owes* to me the service I request of him. For if he had not interposed so hellishly as he did, on Hounslow-heath, I had been the husband of Miss Byron in two hours; and she would have thought it her duty to reform

me: and, by the great God of Heaven, I swear, it was my intention to be reformed, and to make her, if I could have had but her *civility*, though not her *love*, the best of husbands. Lord God of Heaven and Earth! what a happy man had I then been!— Then had I never undertaken that damned expedition to France, of which I have repented ever since. Let your patron know how much I owe to him my unhappiness, and he will not, in justice, deny any reasonable, any honest request, that I shall make him.

Lord help me! What a long letter is here! My soul complains on paper: I do nothing but complain. It will be a relief, if your patron and you will visit, will pray for, will pity,

The most miserable of men,

HARGRAVE POLLEXFEN.

Your brother's eye followed mine, as I read. I frequently wept. In a soothing, tender, and respectful manner, he put his arm round me, and, taking my own handkerchief, unresisted, wiped away the tears as they fell on my cheek. These were his soothing words as my bosom heaved at the dreadful description of the poor man's misery and despair: Sweet humanity!—Charming sensibility!—Check not the kindly gush!—Dew-drops of Heaven! wiping away my tears, and kissing the handkerchief —Dew-drops of Heaven, from a mind, like that Heaven, mild and gracious!—Poor Sir Hargrave! —I will attend him.

You *will*, Sir! That is very good of you!—Poor man! What a hand, as he says, has he made of it!

A hand, indeed! repeated Sir Charles.

And will you be his executor, Sir?—You will, I hope.

I will do any-thing that my dear Miss Byron

wishes me to do; any-thing that may comfort the poor man, if indeed he has not a person in whom he *ought* to confide, whether he is *willing* to do so or not. My endeavour shall be, to reconcile him to his relations: perhaps he hates them because they are likely to be his heirs: I have known men capable of such narrowness.

When we came to the place where the unhappy man mentions my having been likely to be his, in two hours time, a chilness came over my heart; I shuddered. Ah, Sir! said I, how grateful ought I to be to *my* deliverer!

Ever-amiable goodness! resumed he, How have I been, how am I, how shall I be, rewarded?—With tender awe he kissed my cheek—Forgive me, angel of a woman! A man can shew his love but *as* a man. Your heart is the heart I wish it to be! Love, humanity, graciousness, benevolence, forgivingness, all the amiable qualities which can adorn the female mind, are, in perfection, yours! Be your sister-excellence happy! God grant it! and I shall be the happiest man in the world. You, madam, who can pity your oppressor when in misery, can allow of my grateful remembrance of that admirable woman.

Your tender remembrance of Lady Clementina, Sir, will ever be grateful to me.—God Almighty make her happy!—for your sake! for the sake of your dear Jeronymo; and for mine!

There spoke Miss Byron, and Clementina, both in one! Surely you two are informed by one mind! What is distance of countries! What obstacles can there be, to dissever souls so paired?

But, Sir?—*Must* Clementina be *compelled* to marry? *Must* the woman who has loved Sir Charles Grandison; who still avows her love, and only prefers her God to him; be *obliged* to give her hand to another man?

Would to Heaven that her friends, tender, indulgent, as they have always been to her, would not drive too fast! But how can I, of all men, remonstrate to them in this case, when they think nothing is wanting to obtain her compliance, but the knowledge that she never *can* be mine?

O Sir! you shall *still* call her yours, if the dear lady changes her resolution, and *wishes* to be so—*Ought* you not?

And *could* Miss Byron—

She *could*, she *would*, interrupted I—Yet dear, very dear, I am not ashamed to own it, would now the resignation cost me!

Exalted loveliness!

I never, but by such a trial, can be as great as Clementina!—Then could *I*, as *she* does, take comfort in the brevity of human life. Never, never, would *I* be the wife of any other man. And shall the *nobler* Clementina be compelled?

Good God! lifting up his hands and eyes, With what noble minds hast thou distinguished these two women!—Is it for this, madam, that you wish to wait for the next letters from Italy? I have owned before, that I presumed not to declare myself to you till I was sure of Clementina's adherence to a resolution so nobly taken. We will, however, expect the next letters. My situation has not been happy. Nothing but the consciousness of my own integrity (excuse, madam, the seeming boast) and a firm trust in Providence, could, at certain times, have supported me.

My mind, my Charlotte, seemed too high wrought. Seeing me much disturbed, he resumed the subject of Sir Hargrave's letter, as a somewhat less-affecting one. You see, my dearest Miss Byron, said he, a kind of necessity for my hastening up. Another melancholy occasion offers: poor Sir Harry Beau-

champ desires to see me, before he dies.—What a chequered life is this!—I received Sir Hargrave's letter to Dr. Bartlett, and this intimation from my Beauchamp, by a particular dispatch, just before I came hither. I grudge the time I must lose to-morrow: but we must make some sacrifices to good neighbourhood and civility. Poor Greville had a view, by inviting all his neighbours and me, to let himself down gracefully in a certain case. He made a merit of his resignation to me, before all the company; every one of which admired my dear Miss Byron. Well received as I was, by every gentleman then present, I could not avoid inviting them, in my turn; but I will endeavour to recover the time. Have I your approbation, madam, for setting out on Saturday morning, early?—I am afraid I must borrow of the Sunday some hours, on my journey. But visiting the sick is an act of mercy.

You will be so engaged to-morrow, Sir, said I, with your numerous guests (and my uncle and cousin James will add to the number) that I suppose we shall hardly see you before you set out (early, as you say that will be) on Saturday morning.

He said, he had given orders already (and, for fear of mistakes, should inforce them to-night) for the entertainment of his guests; and he would do himself the pleasure of breakfasting with us in the morning.—Dear Lady Clementina, forgive me!—I shall not, I am afraid, know how to part with him, though but for a few weeks.—How could you let him depart from *you*; you knew not but it would be for ever?—But you are a wonder of a woman!—I am at least at this time, a poor creature, compared to you!

I asked his leave to shew my grandmamma and aunt, and my Lucy, as well as his two sisters, Sir Hargrave's letter. He wished that they *only* should see it.

The perusal cost the three dear friends just named some tears. My grandmamma, Lucy tells me (for I was writing to you when they read it) made some fine observations upon the different situations in which the two gentlemen find themselves at this time. I myself could not but recollect the gay, fluttering figure that the poor Sir Hargrave made at Lady Betty Williams's perpetually laughing; and compare it with the dark scene he draws in the letter before me; all brought about in so short a space!

There are, I am told, *worse* men than this: were those who are but *as bad*, to be apprized of the circumstances of Sir Hargrave's story, as fully as we know them, would they not reflect and tremble at his fate, even though that of Merceda (whose exit, I am told, was all horror and despair) and of the unhappy Bagenhall, were not taken into the shocking account?

This last wretch, it seems, his spirits and constitution both broken, is gone, nobody knows whither, having narrowly escaped in person, from an execution that was out against him body and goods; the latter all seized upon; his wife big with child turned out of doors; a mortgagee in possession of his estate: the poor woman wishing but for means to transport herself to her mean friends at Abbeville; a collection set on foot in her neighbourhood, for that purpose, failing; for the poor man was neither beloved, nor pitied.

These particulars your brother's trusty Saunders told my Sally, and in confidence, that your brother, a little before he came down, being acquainted with her destitute condition, sent her, by him, twenty guineas. Saunders said, he never saw a deeper scene of distress.

The poor woman, on her knees, received the

bounty; blessed the donor; owned herself reduced to the last shilling; and that she thought of applying to the parish for assistance to carry her over.

Sir Charles staid not to supper. My grandmamma, being desirous to take leave of her favourite in the morning, has been prevailed upon to repose here to-night.

I must tell you, my Charlotte, all my fears, my feelings, my follies: you are *now*, you know, my Lucy. Something arises in my heart, that makes me uneasy: I cannot account to myself for this great and sudden change of behaviour in Greville. His extraordinary civilities, even to fondness, to your brother! Are they consistent with his blustering character, and constant threatenings of any man who was likely to succeed with me? A turn of behaviour so sudden! Sir Charles and he in a manner strangers, but by character—And did he not so far prosecute his menaces, as to try, wicked wretch! what bluster and a drawn sword would do, and smart for it? Must not that disgrace incense him?—My uncle says, he cannot be a true spirit; witness his compromise with Fenwick, after a rencounter, which, being reported to be on my account, had like to have killed me at the time. And if not a true spirit, may he not be treacherous! God preserve your brother from all secret as well as open attacks! And do you, my dear ladies, forgive the tender folly of your

HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER XXXII.

MISS BYRON. IN CONTINUATION.

Friday morning, eight o'clock, October 27.

THE apprehensions with which I was so weak as to trouble you, in the conclusion of my last, laid so fast hold of my mind, that, going immediately from my pen to my rest, I had it broken and disturbed by dreadful, shocking, wandering dreams. The terror they gave me, several times awakened me; but still, as I closed my eyes, I fell into them again. Whence, my dear, proceed these ideal vagaries, which, for the time, realize pain or pleasure to us, according to their hue or complexion, or rather according to our own?

But such *contradictory* vagaries never did I know in my slumbers. Incoherencies of incoherence!—For example—I was married to the best of men: I was *not* married: I was rejected with scorn, as a presumptuous creature. I sought to hide myself in holes and corners. I was dragged out of a subterraneous cavern, which the sea had made when it once broke bounds, and seemed the dwelling of howling and conflicting winds; and when I expected to be punished for my audaciousness, and for repining at my lot, I was turned into an angel of light; stars of diamonds, like a glory, encompassing my head: a dear little baby was put into my arms. Once it was Lucy's; another time it was Emily's; and at another time Lady Clementina's!—I was fond of it, beyond expression.

I again dreamed I was married: Sir Charles again was the man. He did not love me. My grandmamma and aunt, on their knees, and with tears, besought him to love their child; and pleaded to

him my love of him of long standing, begun in gratitude; and that he was the only man I ever loved. O how I wept in my dream! my face and bosom were wet with my real tears.

My sobs, and my distress and *theirs*, awakened me; but I dropt asleep, and fell into the very same reverie. He upbraided me with being the cause that he had not Lady Clementina. He said, and *so* sternly! I am sure he cannot look so sternly, that he thought me a much better creature than I proved to be: yet methought, in my own heart, I was not altered. I fell down at his feet. I called it my misfortune, that he could not love me: I would not say it was his fault. It might, perhaps, be his misfortune too!—And then I said, Love and hatred are not always in one's power. If you cannot love the poor creature who kneels before you, *that* shall be a cause sufficient with me for a divorce: I desire not to fasten myself on the man who cannot love me. Let me be divorced from you, Sir—You shall be at liberty to assign any cause for the separation, but *crime*. I will bind myself never, never to marry again; but you shall be free—And God bless you, and her you can love better than your poor Harriet. —Fool! I weep as I write!—What a weak creature I am, since I have not been well!

In another part of my reverie he loved me dearly; but when he nearly approached me, or I him, he always became a ghost, and flitted from me. Scenes once changed from England to Italy, from Italy to England: Italy, I thought, was a dreary wild, covered with snow, and pinched with frost: England, on the contrary, was a country glorious to the eye; gilded with a sun not too fervid; the air perfumed with odours, wafted by the most balmy zephyrs from orange-trees, citrons, myrtles, and jasmines. In

Italy, at one time, Jeronymo's wounds were healed; at another, they were breaking out afresh. Mr. Lowther was obliged to fly the country: why, did not appear. There was a fourth brother, I thought; and he, taking part with the cruel Laurana, was killed by the general. Father Marescotti was at one time a martyr for his religion; at another, a cardinal; and talked of for pope.

But still, what was more shocking, and which so terrified me that I awoke in a horror which put an end to all my reveries (for I slept no more that night)—Sir Charles, I thought, was assassinated by Greville. Greville fled his country for it, and became a vagabond, a Cain, the accursed, I thought, of God and man—I, your poor Harriet, a widow; left in the most calamitous circumstance that a woman can be in—Good Heaven!—But, avaunt, recollection!—Painful, *most* painful, recollection of ideas so terrible! none of your intrusions—

No more of these horrid, horrid incongruities, will I trouble you with! How have they run away with me! I am hardly now recovered from the tremblings into which they threw me!

What, my dear, is the reason, that though we know these dreams, these fleeting shadows of the night, to be no more than *dreams*, illusions of the working mind, fettered and debased as it is by the organs through which it conveys its confined powers to the grosser matter, body, then sleeping, inactive, as in the shades of death; yet that we cannot help being strongly impressed by them, and meditating interpretation of the flying vapours, when reason is broad awake, and tells us, that it is weakness to be disturbed at them?—But superstition is, more or less, I believe, in every mind, a natural defect. Happily poised is that mind, which, on the one hand, is too

strong to be affected by the slavish fears it brings with it; and, on the other, runs not into the contrary extreme, scepticism, the parent of infidelity!

You cannot imagine, my dear, the pleasure I had, the more for my various dream, when your brother, so amiably serene, love, condescension, affability, shining in his manly countenance, alighted, as I saw him through my window, at the same time I had the call to breakfast—Dear Sir! I could have said, Have not *you* been disturbed by cruel, perplexing, contradictory visions? Souls may be near, when bodies are distant. But are we not one soul? Could yours be unaffected, when mine was so much disturbed? —But, thank God, you are come! Come safe, unhurt, pleased with me! My fond arms, were the ceremony passed, should welcome you to your Harriet. I would tell you all my disturbances from the absurd illusions of the past night, and my mind should gather strength from the confession of its weakness.

He talked of setting out early to-morrow morning. His first visit, he said, should be to Sir Harry Beauchamp; his next to Sir Hargrave Pollexfen. Poor Sir Harry! he said, and sighed for him.

Tender-hearted man! as Clementina often called your brother: he pitied Lady Beauchamp. His poor Beauchamp!—The loss of a father, he said, where a great estate was to descend to the son, was the test of a noble heart. He could answer for the sincerity of his Beauchamp's grief, on this trying occasion. Of what joy, said he [sitting between two of the best of women, equally fond of him, speaking low] was I, was *my* father, deprived! He had allowed me to think of returning to the arms of his paternal love. I make no doubt, but on looking into his affairs (his son, perhaps his steward) he would have done for his daughters what I have done for my

sisters. We should both of us have had a new life to begin, and pursue: a happy one, from my duty and his indulgence, it must have been. I had planned it out.—With all humility I would, by degrees, have laid it before him, first one part, then another, as his condescension would have countenanced me.

Vile, vile reveries!—Must not this young man be the peculiar care of Heaven? How could my disturbed imagination terrify me but in a dream, that the machinations of the darkest mind (as his must be [Greville is not so bad a man] who could meditate violence against virtue so sacredly guarded) could be permitted to prevail against his life!

My grandmamma once, with tears in her eyes, as he talked of taking leave, laid her hand upon his, and instantly withdrew it, as if she thought the action too free. He took her hand, and with both his, raised it to his lips—Venerable goodness! he called her. She looked *so* proud, and *so* comforted! every one *so* pleased!—It is a charming thing to see blooming youth fond of declining age!

They dropt away one by one, and I found myself left alone with him. Sweetly tender was his address to me!—How shall I part with my Harriet? said he. My eyes were ready to overflow. By a twinkling motion, I thought to disperse over the whole eye the self-felt too ready tear: my upper-lip had the motion in it, throbbing, like the pulsation which we call the life blood—I was afraid to speak, for fear of bursting into a fit of tenderness; yet was conscious that my very silence was more expressive of tenderness than speech could have been. With what delight did his eager eye (as mine, now-and-then glancing upward, discovered) meditate my downcast face, and silent concern! Yet such was his delicacy, that he took not that notice of it, in words, which, if he had, would have added to my confusion:

it was enough for him, that he saw it. As he was contented *silently* to enjoy it, I am not sorry he *did* see it. He merited even open and unreserved assurances of love. But I the sooner recovered my spirits, for his delicate non-observance. I could not, circumstanced as we were, say I *wished* for his speedy return; yet, my dear, my purest wishes were, that he would not be long absent. My grand-mamma pleases herself with having the dear man for her inmate, on his return: there is therefore no need, for the sake of the world's speech, to abridge my month; yet *ought* we to be shy of giving consequence to a man who through delicacy is afraid to let us see that he assumes consequence from our speechless tenderness for him?—He restored me to speech, by a change of subject—

Two melancholy offices shall I have to perform, said he, before I have the honour to attend again my dearest Miss Byron: What must be the heart that melts not at another's woe!—As to Sir Hargrave, I don't apprehend that he is near his end; as is the case of poor Sir Harry. Sir Hargrave labours under bodily pains, from the attack made upon him in France, and from a constitution ruined perhaps by riot; and, having nothing of consolation to give himself from reflections on his past life (as we see by his letter) his fears are too strong for his hopes. But shall I tell him, if I find it will give him comfort, that *you* wish his recovery, and are sorry for his indisposition? Small crevices let in light, sometimes upon a benighted imagination. He must consider his attempt upon your free-will (though not meant upon your honour) as one of the enormities of his past life.

I was overpowered with this instance of his generous goodness. Teach me, Sir, to be good, to be generous, to be forgiving—like you!—Bid me do

what you think proper for me to do—Say to the poor man, whose insults upon you in his challenge were then my terror (O how much my terror!) in my name, say, all that you think will tend to give him consolation.

Sweet excellence! Did I ever hope to meet in woman with such an enlargement of heart!—Clementina only, of all the women I ever knew, can be set in comparison with you: and had *she* been granted to me, the union of minds between us from difference of religion, could not have been so perfect, as yours and mine must be.

Greatly gratified as I was by the compliment, I was sorry, methought, that it was made me at the expence of my sex. His words, 'Did I ever hope to meet in woman with such an enlargement of heart!' pique me a little. Are not women as capable as men, thought I, of enlarged sentiments?

The leave he took of me was extremely tender. I endeavoured to check my sensibility. He departed with the blessings of the whole family, as well as mine. I was forced to go up to my closet: I came not down till near dinner-time; I *could* not; and yet my uncle accompanied my cousin James to Northampton: so that I had no apprehensions of his raillery. We want trials sometimes, I believe, to make us support ourselves with some degree of *outward* fortitude, at least. Had my uncle been at home, I should not have dared to have given so much way to my concern: but soothing and indulgence, sometimes, I believe, add to our imbecility of mind, instead of strengthening our reason.

* *

My uncle made it near eleven at night before he returned, with my cousin James. Not one of the company, at his quitting it, seemed inclinable to move. He praised the elegance of the entertain-

ment, and the ease and cheerfulness, even to vivacity, of Sir Charles. How *could* he be so lively!—How many ways have men to divert themselves, when any thing arduous attacks them!—While we poor women!—But your town diversions—Your Ranelaghs, Vauxhalls—bid fair to divert such of us as can carry ourselves out of ourselves!—Yet are we likely to pay dear for the privilege; since we thereby render our sex cheap in the eyes of men, harden our fronts, and are in danger of losing that modesty, at least of *outward* behaviour, which is the characteristic of women!

Saturday morning.

He is gone: gone indeed! Went early this morning. Every mouth was last night, it seems, full of his praises: the men admire him as much as the women. I am glad of it, methinks; since that is an indirect confession, that there are few among them like him. Not so much superiority over our sex therefore, in the other, in general, with their *enlarged hearts.* Have not we a Clementina, a Mrs. Shirley, and a long *&c.*?—I praise not *you,* my dear Lady L. and Lady G. to your faces; so I leave the *&c.* untranslated.

We do *so* look upon one another here! Are *so* unsatisfied with ourselves! We are not half so good company as we were before Sir Charles came among us. How can that be? But my grandmamma has left us too!—that's one thing. She is retired to Shirley-manor, to mortify, after so rich a regale: those were her words.

I hope your brother will write to us. Should I not have asked him? To be sure he will; except his next letters from Italy should be—But, no doubt, he will write to us. Mr. Greville vows to my uncle, he will not come near me. He can less and less, he says,

bear to think of my marrying; though he does what he can to comfort himself with reflecting on the extraordinary merit of the man, who alone, he says, can deserve me. He wishes the day were over; and the d—l's in him, he adds, if the irrevocableness of the event does not cure him. Mr. Fenwick had yesterday his final answer from Lucy; and he is to set out on Monday for Carlisle. He declares, that he will not return without a wife: so, thank Heaven, his heart is whole, notwithstanding his double disappointment.

* *

But my heart is set on hearing how the excellent Clementina takes the news of your brother's actual address, and probability of succeeding. I should not think it at all surprising, if, urged as she is, to marry a man indifferent to her (the lord of her heart unmarried) she should retract—O my Charlotte!—What a variety of strange, strange, What-shall-I call them? would result from such a retractation and renewal of claim! I never thought myself superstitious; but the happiness before me is so much beyond my merit, that I can hardly flatter myself, at times, that it will take place.

* *

What think you, my dear, made me write so apprehensively?—My aunt had just shewn me a letter she had written to you—desiring you—to exercise for us your fancy, your judgment. I have no affectation on this subject—I long ago gave affectation to the winds—But so hasty!—So undoubting!—Are there not many possibilities, and some probabilities, against us?—Something presumptuous!—Lord bless me, my dear, should any-thing happen—Jewels bought, and already presented—Apparel—How would all these preparations aggravate! My aunt says, he *shall* be obliged: Lucy, Nancy, the

Miss Holles's, join with her. They long to be exercising their fancies upon the patterns which they suppose your ladyship and Lady L. will send down. My uncle hurries my aunt. So as *something* is going forward, he says, he shall be easy. There is no resisting so strong a tide: so let them take their course. They are all in haste, my dear, to be considered as relations of your family, and to regard all yours as kindred of ours. Happy, happy, the band, that shall tie both families together!

HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER XXXIII.

SIR CHARLES GRANDISON TO MISS BYRON.

London, Monday night, October 30.

YOUR humanity, my dear and ever dear Miss Byron, was so much engaged by the melancholy letter of Sir Hargrave to Dr. Bartlett, which I communicated to you; and by the distress of my Beauchamp, on the desperate state of his father's health; that I know that you will be pleased to hear that I have been enabled to give some consolation to both.

Sir Harry, who is in town, wanted to open his mind to me with regard to some affairs which made him extremely uneasy; and which, he said, he could not reveal to any-body else. He shewed some reluctance to entrust the secrets to *my* bosom. There shall they ever rest. He has found himself easier since. He rejoiced to me on the good understanding subsisting, and likely to subsist, between his lady and son. He desired me to excuse him for joining me with them, without asking my leave, in the trusts created by his will: and on this occasion,

sending for his lady, he put her hand in mine, and recommended her, and her interests, as those of the most obliging of wives, to my care.

I found Sir Hargrave at his house in Cavendish Square. He is excessively low-spirited. Dr. Bartlett visited him at Windsor, several times. The doctor prevailed on him to retain a worthy clergyman, as his chaplain.

The poor man asked after you, madam. He had heard, he said, that I was soon likely to be the happiest of men: was it so? He wept at my answer; lamented the wretched hand, as he called it, that *he* had made of it, blessed as he was with such prosperous circumstances, in the prime of youth; and wished he had his days to come over again, and his company to chuse. Unhappy man! he was willing to remove from *himself* the load which lay upon him. No doubt but this was the recourse of his companions, likewise, in extremity. He blessed my dearest Miss Byron, when I told him, she pitied him. He called himself by harsh, and even shocking names, for having been capable of offending so much goodness.

What subjects are these, to entertain my angel with!—But though we should not *seek*, yet we ought not perhaps to *shun* them, when they naturally, as I may say, offer themselves to our knowledge.

But *another* subject calls for the attention of my dearest, loveliest of women: a subject that will lay a still stronger claim to it than either of the solemn ones I have touched upon. I inclose the letter which contains it. You will be so good as to read it in English to such of our friends as read not Italian.

This letter was left to Mrs. Beaumont to dispatch to me; whence its unwished-for delay: for she detained it, to send with it an equally obliging one of

her own. The contents of this welcome letter, my dearest Miss Byron, will render it unnecessary to wait for an answer to my last to Signor Jeronymo; in which I acquaint him with my actual address, and the hopes I presume to flatter myself with. I humbly hope you will think so.

I am not afraid that one of the most generous of women will be affected with the passage in which Signor Jeronymo expresses his pity for her, because of the affection, he says, I must ever retain for his noble sister*. He says right. And it is my happiness, that you, the sister-excellence of the admirable Clementina, will allow me to glory in my *gratitude* to her. You will still more readily allow me so to do, when you have perused this letter. Shall not the man who hopes to be qualified for the Supreme love, of which the purest earthly is but a type, and who aims at an universal benevolence, be able to admire, in the mind of Clementina, the same great qualities which shine out with such lustre in that of Miss Byron?

With what pride do I look forward to the visit that several of this noble family intend to make us, because of the *unquestionable* assurance that they will rejoice in my happiness, and admire the angel who is allowed to take place in my affections of the angel who would not have scrupled to accept of my vows, had it not been, as she expresses herself †, for the *intervention of invincible obstacles!*

Mrs. Beaumont, in her letter, gives me the particulars of the conversation between her and Clementina, almost in the same words with those of Jeronymo in the letter inclosed. She makes no doubt that Lady Clementina will, in time, yield to the entreaties of her friends in favour of a man

* See p. 249. † See p. 253.

against whom, if she can be prevailed upon to forego her wishes to assume the veil, she can have no one objection. You will see, madam, by the inclosed, what they hope for in Italy from us; what Clementina, what Jeronymo, what a whole excellent family, hope for. You know how ardently my *own* family wish you to accelerate the happy day: yours refer themselves wholly to you—Pardon me, my dearest Miss Byron, I will tell you what are my hopes—They are, that when I am permitted to return to Northamptonshire, the happy day shall not be postponed *three*.

And now, loveliest and dearest of women! allow me to expect the honour of a line, to let me know how much of the tedious month, from last Thursday, you will be so good as to abate. Permit me to say, that I can have nothing that needs to detain me from the beloved of my heart, after Friday next.

If, madam, you insist upon the *whole* month, I beg to know, out of what part of our nuptial life, the LAST or the FIRST (happy, as I hope it will be) you would be willing to deduct the week, the fortnight, that will be carried into the blank space of courtship, by the delay? I hope, my dear Miss Byron, that I shall be able to tell *you*, years and years after we are ONE, that there is not an hour of those past, or of those to come, that I would abate, or wish to throw into that *blank*. Permit me so to call it. The days of courtship cannot be *our* happiest. Who celebrates the day of their first acquaintance, though it may be remembered with pleasure?—Do not the happy pair *date* their happiness from the day of marriage? How justly then, when hearts are *assured*, when minds *cannot alter*, are those which precede it, to be deemed a blank!

After all, your *cheerful* compliance with my wishes, is the great desirable. Whatever shall be your plea-

sure, must determine me. My utmost gratitude will be engaged by the condescension, *whenever* you shall distinguish the day of the year, distinguished as it will be to the end of my life, that shall give me the greatest blessing of it, and confirm me

For ever yours,

CHARLES GRANDISON.

LETTER XXXIV.

SIGNOR JERONYMO DELLA PORRETTA TO SIR CHARLES GRANDISON.

[*Inclosed in the preceding.*]

Bologna, October 18, N. S.

I GAVE you, my dear Grandison, in mine of the 5th, the copy of a paper written by my sister, which filled us with hopes of her compliance with the wishes of all her family. She took time for deliberation; time was given her; but still she insisted on receiving your next letters before she came to any resolution. Mrs. Beaumont herself was of opinion, that the dear creature only meditated delay: that also was ours. What, invincibly determined, as she is, to adhere to the resolution she has so greatly taken, can she hope for (said we among ourselves) from the expected letters? For she had declared herself to be *so* determined, to my brother Giacomo, who actually assured her of all our consents to an alliance with you, if she repented of that resolution.

All this time we offered not to introduce, nor even to name, to her, the Count of Belvedere. Awed by her former calamity, and by an excursiveness of imagination, which at times shewed itself in her words

and behaviour, we avoided saying or doing any thing that was likely to disturb her. Giacomo himself, though he wanted to return to Naples, had patience with her pretty trifling, beyond our expectation. At last arrived yours of the 29th of September *; kindly inclosing a copy of yours to her, of the same date †. We question not but your reply to mine of the 5th current, is on the road; nor that the contents will be such as we may hope for, from considerations of our happiness and your own: but these, we thought, without waiting for that, would answer the desired end. I will tell you what was said by every one, on the perusal of both.

Is this the man, said the general, whom I sometimes so rudely treated? I rejoice that we were reconciled before he left us. I had formed a notion to his disadvantage; that he was capable of art, and hoped to keep his hold in my sister's affections, in view of some turn in his favour: but he is the most single-hearted of men. These two letters will strengthen our arguments. Clementina, who has more than once declared that she wishes him married to an English woman, cannot now, that she will see there is a woman with whom he thinks he can be happy, wish to stand in his way. These will furnish us with means to attack her in her strongest hold; in her generosity, her delicacy; and will bring to the test her veracity. The contents of these letters will confirm her before half-taken resolution, as in her paper, to oblige us ‡. Let *Laurana*, as the chevalier says, go into a nunnery: Clementina will marry, or she is a false girl; and the Sforza women will be disappointed.

My mother applauded you, and rejoiced to hear

* See Letter v. p. 14. † See Letter iv. p. 11.
‡ See p. 93, of this Volume.

that, there is a woman of your own nation who is capable of making you more happy than her daughter could.

What difficulties, said the young marchioness, (ever your friend) must a situation so critical have laid him under! A man so humane! And what further difficulties must he have to surmount, in offering to a woman, whom even Olivia, as he says, admires, a hand that has been refused by another? May this admired woman be propitious to his suit!

She must, she must, said the bishop. If she has a heart disengaged, she cannot refuse a man so accomplished. Jeronymo, hasten to be well. If she favour him, we will all go over, and congratulate them both.

I, for my part, said I, would give up years of life to see my friend as happy in marriage as he deserves to be.

We must tell Clementina, said my father, as our Giacomo has hinted, that it will not become her generosity to stand in the way of the chevalier's happiness.

We sent up your letter to our sister, by Camilla. She was busy (Mrs. Beaumont sitting by her at work) in correcting the proportion which once you found fault with, in a figure in her piece of Noah's ark, and the rising deluge. A letter, madam, from the chevalier—To *me!* said she; and overturned the table on which her materials lay, in haste to take it.

When we thought she had had time to consider of the contents, we sent up to request the favour of speaking with Mrs. Beaumont. We owned to her, that we had a copy of your letter to Clementina; and asked, what the dear creature said to the contents of it?

She read it, answered Mrs. Beaumont, in her own closet. I thought she was too long by herself. I went to her. She was in tears. O Mrs. Beaumont, as soon as she saw me, holding out the letter—See here!—The *chevalier* is against me!—Cruel, I could *almost* say, cruel Grandison!—He turns my own words upon me. I have furnished him with arguments against myself—What shall I do?—I have for many days past repented that I gave, under my hand, reason to my friends to expect my compliance. I cannot, cannot, confirm the hopes I gave!—What shall I do?

I took it, read it, continued Mrs. Beaumont, and told her that the chevalier's arguments were unanswerable. I dwelt upon some of them. She wept, and was silent.

We then, my dear Grandison, shewed Mrs. Beaumont your letter to me. She read it—How, said she, has this excellent young man been embarrassed! I know, from some of my countrymen, the character of the lady whom he mentions: she is an excellent woman!—May I take up this letter, and read it to Lady Clementina?

By all means, answered the general; and support, dear madam, the contents of both with your weight. It will be from perverseness *now*, if she withstand us. Bid her remember, that she has had once at her feet a kneeling father! Bid her remember the written hopes she has given us!

Mrs. Beaumont went up with it. I will give you an account of what my sister said as she read it. O Grandison, read it but cursorily: you will more and more admire and love the Clementina, who, before her malady, was always considered as one of the first of women; and the glory of our house!

She desired to have it in her own hands; Mrs.

Beaumont, to whose pen we owe the account, looked over her, and followed her eye, as she read*.

'And did he still, said she, *after* he had got to England, hope for a change in my resolution?'—Heaven knows—She stopt; sighed, and read on.

'He foresaw that my friends would press me to marry!'—I foresaw it too!—I have indeed been pressed; vehemently pressed!

'Rather than any other'—Ah, chevalier!—Why, why, were the obstacles religion and country! None less should have—She stopt—Then, reading to herself, proceeded:

'It was not presumptuous to hope'—No, Grandison; presumptuous it could not be.

'It was *justice* to Clementina, to attend the event, and to wait for the promised letter.' Kind, considerate Grandison!—You were all patience, all goodness!—O that—

There she stopt. Then proceeding:

'Fourth brother! Not interested in the event.'—Indeed I did write so—

'Give up all his hopes!'—Dear Grandison!

'It could not be expected that he should give the argument all its weight.'—He has given it too much!

'Duty to yield to the entreaties of all my friends.' Ah, Grandison!

'Difficult situations!'—Difficult indeed! And here am I, who have, more than any other in the world, enhanced his difficulties!—Unhappy Clementina!—Then reading on—

Good God! Mrs. Beaumont! 'There is an English lady, with whom he was *actually*—Does he not hint in love?'—Nay, then—Take it, take it, Mrs. Beaumont!—I can read no further—*Compassion*

* See Letter v. p. 14, of this Volume.

only, I suppose, brought him over to me!—I cannot bear that—Yet snatching it from her, and reading,

'Beauty her least perfection'—[Happy English lady!] 'Either in my eyes, or her own!'—Have I not wished him *such* a woman?—'Had I never *known* Clementina!'—How could I be so captious!

'Loves her with a flame as pure as the heart of Clementina'—Thank you, chevalier! Indeed I have no impurity in my love—My God only have I preferred to you: and I bless God for enabling me to give so *due* a preference!—' or, as her own heart can boast.'—Just such a wife did I wish him; and shall I not rejoice, if *such* a one will hold out her hand to make him happy?

She sighed often, as she read on; but spoke not, till she came to the words, 'That she was to you, what you might truly call, a first love;' A first love, repeated she: he was indeed mine! Permit me to say, my dear friends, a first and *only* one.

'It became him, he says, in honour, in gratitude, though the difficulties in his way seemed insuperable, [and so they *must* seem] to hold himself in suspense, and not offer to make his addresses to any other woman.'—Generous, noble Grandison!—He *did* love me—Discouraged as he was; nay, insulted by some of us [Giacomo hears me not, looking round her]; *he*, the generous Grandison, *did* love me. She wiped her eyes.

Recovering herself, and reading on—See here, Mrs. Beaumont—'He thought himself obliged, in honour to me, and to the persons themselves, to decline proposals of advantage.' Surely he must think me an ungrateful creature.

But (reading on) *did* he 'balance in his mind between this lady and me?'—He did. But it was because of his uncertainty with *me*.

Reading to herself, to the words, 'Almost an

equal interest,' How is that? said she, repeating them.—O, it is explained—' But when his dear 'Clementina' [Do I go too fast for your eye, Mrs. Beaumont?] ' began to shew signs of recovery,' [She sighed] ' and seemed to confirm the hopes I had given him of my *partiality* for him,' [Modest, good man!] ' then did I content myself,' says he, [Look, Mrs. Beaumont] ' with wishing another husband to the English lady, more worthy of her than my unhappy situation could have made me'—Excellent English lady! If it were in my power, I would make you amends for having shared a heart with you (so it seems) that ought, *my* circumstances and *your* merit considered, to have been all your own!

' What a disappointment was my rejection of him?' —See, these are his words.—And these too; that ' he admires me, however, for my *motives*.'

' Marriage, he says, is not in his power; for there is but one woman in the world, now *I* have refused him, that he can think worthy of succeeding *me*.'—What honour he does me. Thank God she is an English woman! O that I had any influence over her! Sweet lady, amiable English woman, let not punctilio deprive you of such a man as this!—Shew her this letter, my good Grandison! Let me transcribe from it, *rather*, for your perusal, happy English lady! certain passages in it, so delicate, so worthy of himself, and of you.

' Thousands, of whom he is not worthy,' he says. How can he say so?

' She has for an admirer every one who knows her.'—She shall have me for an admirer, Mrs. Beaumont, if she will accept of my fourth brother. She *will* accept of him, if she deserves the character he gives her: Let me tell you, lady, that your heart is narrower than that of Clementina, if you think it a

diminution to your honour, that he has loved that Clementina. Why cannot you and I be sisters? My love shall be but a sisterly love. You may depend upon the honour of the Chevalier Grandison. He will do *his* duty in every relation of life. What can be your doubts?

Even Olivia, he says, admires you!—And will such a woman stand upon punctilious observances, like women of ordinary consequence, having to deal with common men?—O that I knew this lady! I would convince her, that he 'can do justice to *her* greater, and to *my* lesser merits; and yet not appear to be divided by a double love; although he should own to all the world, as he says he will,' [See, see, Mrs. Beaumont, these are his very words] 'his affection for Clementina, and glory in it!'

O Mrs. Beaumont, how my soul, putting her hand to her forehead, then to her heart, loves his soul! nor but for *one* obstacle, that would have shaken my faith, and endangered my salvation (had I got over it) should his soul *only* have been the object of my love.

Let me but continue single, my dear friends; indulge me in the wish that has been so long next my heart! and take not advantage of the hopes I have given you in writing; and I shall pass happily through this short life; a life that deserves not the bustle which we make about it. Ask me not either to 'set or follow the example you propose to me:' I cannot do either. Unkind chevalier, why would you strengthen *their* hands, and weaken *mine*?—Yet, if it became your justice, what had I *but* justice to expect from a just man; who has so eminently performed all his own duties, and particularly the filial; which he here calls an article of religion?

When she came to the concluding part of this letter, and your wishes for her perfect recovery, health

and welfare, and for the happiness of us all; May every blessing, said she, he wishes us, be his!

Then folding up the letter, and putting it in her bosom; This letter, and that which accompanied it, (meaning yours to her) I must read over and over.

Shall I say, my Grandison, that I half-pity the lovely Harriet Byron, though her name should be changed to yours? You *must* love Clementina: were a sovereign princess her rival, you *must*. Clementina! who so generously can give up a love as fervent as ever glowed in a virgin heart, on superior motives; motives which regard eternity; and receive joy in the prospect of your happiness with another woman, on a persuasion that that woman can make you happier than she herself could, because of a difference in religion.

My sister choosing to retire to her closet, to re-peruse the two letters, Mrs. Beaumont, knowing our curiosity, put down what had passed; intending, as she said, to write a copy of it for you.

How were we all, on perusing it, charmed with our Clementina! I insisted, that nothing, at present, should be said to her of the Count of Belvedere, and of our wishes in his favour. My father gave into my opinion. He said, he thought the properest time to mention the count to her, was, when we had an answer to the letter I wrote to you on the 5th current, if that could give us assurances that you had made your addresses to the charming Byron, and were encouraged. The general was impatient; but he acquiesced, on finding every one come into my motion; but said, that if all this lenity did not do, he must beg leave to have his own measures pursued.

* *

Some little particularity has appeared in the dear

creature since I have written the above. She has been exceedingly earnest with her mother, to use her interest with my father, and us, to be allowed to go to England: but desires not the permission till you are actually married. She pleads my health, because of the salutary springs you mention to me.

Several other pleas she offered; but, to say truth, they carried with them such an air of flightiness, that I am loth to mention them: yet all of them were innocent, all of them were even laudable. But (shall I say?) that some of them appeared too romantic for a settled brain to be so earnest, as she is, for having them carried into execution.

We have no doubt, but all her view is, to avoid marriage, by such a strange excursion. Dear creature, said the bishop, speaking of her just now, the veil denied her, she must have *some* point to carry: I wish we saw less rapidity in her manner.

I, Grandison, for my part, remember how much she and we all suffered by denying her the farewell-visit from you, on your taking leave of Italy the time before the last.

But we think an expedient has offered, that will divert her from this *wildness*, as I must call it: Mrs. Beaumont has requested, that she may be allowed to take her with her to Florence for some weeks. Clementina is pleased with our readiness to oblige them both; and they will soon go.

But all this time she is uniform and steady in her wishes for your marriage. She delights to hear Mrs. Beaumont talk of the perfections of the lady to whom we are all desirous of hearing you are united. You had written, it seems, to Mrs. Beaumont, a character given of this young lady by Olivia, upon a personal knowledge of her. Mrs. Beaumont shewed it to Clementina.

How generously did the dear creature rejoice in

it! Just such a woman, said she, did I wish for the chevalier. Olivia has shewn greatness of mind in this instance. Perhaps I have thought too hardly of Olivia. Little did I think, I should ever have requested a copy of any-thing written by Olivia. Ill-will disables us from seeing those beauties in the person who is the object of it, which would otherwise strike us to her advantage. You must oblige me, added she, with a copy of this extract.

October 20. N. S.

You will be pleased, I know, my Grandison, with every particular that shall tend to demonstrate the pleasure the dear Clementina takes in hoping you will be soon the happy man we all wish you to be.

This morning she came down with her work into my chamber. I invite myself, Jeronymo, said she. I will sit down by you, till you are disposed to rise. She then, of her own motion, began to talk of you; and I, putting it to her (as her mother did yesterday) whether she would be really glad to hear of your nuptials, received the same answer she then made: *she sincerely should:* she hoped the next letters would bring an account that it was so. But then Jeronymo, continued she, I shall be teazed, persecuted. Let me not, my brother, be persecuted. I don't know, whether downright compulsion is not more tolerable than over-earnest entreaty. A child, in the first instance, may contract herself, as I may say, within her own compass; may be hardened: but the entreaty of such friends as undoubtedly mean one's good, dilates and disarms one's heart, and makes one wish to oblige them; and so renders one miserable, whether we do or do not comply. Believe me, Jeronymo, there is great cruelty in persuasion, and still more to a soft and gentle temper, than to a stubborn one: persuaders know not what they make such a person suffer.

My dearest Clementina, said I, you have shewn so glorious a magnanimity, that it would be injuring you, to suppose you are not equal to every branch of *duty*. God forbid that you should be called to sustain an unreasonable trial—In a reasonable one, you must be victorious.

Ah Jeronymo! How little do I deserve this fine compliment!—Magnanimity, my brother!—You know not what I yet, at times, suffer!—And have you not seen my reason vanquished in the unequal conflict? She wept. But let the chevalier be married, and to the angel that is talked of; and let me comfort myself, that he is not a sufferer by my withholding my hand—And *then* let me be indulged in the single life, in a place consecrated to retirement from the vain world; and we shall *both* be happy.

Mrs. Beaumont came to seek her. I prevailed on her to sit down, and on my sister to stay a little longer. I extolled my sister to her: she joined in the just praise. But one act of magnanimity, said Mrs. Beaumont, seems wanting to complete the greatness of your character, my love, in this particular case of the expected marriage of the Chevalier Grandison.

What is that, Mrs. Beaumont?—all attention.

You see his doubts, his apprehensions of appearing worthy of the lady so highly spoken of, because of that delicacy of situation (which, as you observe, Olivia also hints at) from what may be called a divided love: Miss Byron may very well imagine, as his love of you commenced before he knew her, that she may injure you if she receive his addresses: you had the generosity to wish, when you were reading those his apprehensions, that you *knew* the lady, and were able to influence her in his favour.

Well, Mrs. Beaumont—

Can I doubt that Lady Clementina is *able* to set

her name to the noble sentiments, that so lately, on reading his letter, flowed from her lips?

What would Mrs. Beaumont have me do?

Let me lead you to your own closet. Pen, ink, and paper, are always before you there. Assume your whole noble self, and we shall see what that assumption will produce.

All that is in my power, said she, to promote the happiness of a man who has suffered so much through my means, it is my duty to do.

She gave her hand to Mrs. Beaumont; who led her to her closet, and left her there. The following is the result. Generous, noble creature!—But does it not shew a raised imagination? especially in the disposition of the lines?

Best of men! } Be ye ONE.
Best of women! }
CLEMENTINA wishes it!
GRANDISON, lady, will make you happy.
Be it *your* study to make *him* so!—
Happy, as CLEMENTINA would have made him,
Had not obstacles invincible intervened.
This will lessen her regrets:
For,
His felicity, temporal and eternal,
Was ever the wish next her heart.
GOD be merciful to you both,
And lead you into his paths:
Then will everlasting happiness be your portion.
Be it the portion of CLEMENTINA!—
Pray for her!—
That, after this transitory life is over,
She may partake of heavenly bliss;
And
(Not a stranger to you, lady, HERE)
Rejoice with you both HEREAFTER.
CLEMENTINA della PORRETTA.

The admirable creature gave this to Mrs. Beaumont: Send this, madam, said she, if you think proper, to your friend and my friend, the Chevalier Grandison. Tell him, that I shall think myself very happy, if it may serve as a testimonial, to the lady whose merits entitle her to his love, of my sincere wishes for their mutual happiness: tell him, that at present I wish for nothing more ardently, than to hear of his nuptials being celebrated.

Dear Grandison! let your next give us an opportunity to felicitate you on this desirable event. In this wish joins every one of a family to whom you are, and ever will be, dear. Witness, for them all,

The Marquis and Marchioness della PORRETTA.
I. T. R. Bishop of Nocera.
JERONYMO della PORRETTA.
J. P. M. MARESCOTTI.
HORTENSIA BEAUMONT.

LETTER XXXV.

MISS BYRON TO SIR CHARLES GRANDISON.

Wednesday, November 1.

How, Sir, have the contents of your friend Jeronymo's letter affected me!—I am more and more convinced, that, however distinguished my lot *may* be, Clementina only can deserve you. What a vain creature must I be, if I did *not* think so! And what a disingenuous one, so thinking, if I did not acknowledge it!

I cannot, Sir, misconstrue your delicate sensibilities. My own teach me to allow for yours.

'Best of men,' I can, I do, with Clementina, think you: but Harriet's ambition will be gratified, in being accounted second to HER.

And *does* Clementina 'wish us ONE!'—Most noble, most generous of women!

'Grandison, you say, will make me happy.'

'But ah, my lovely pattern! *can* Harriet be happy, even with her Grandison, if *you* are not so?

'Believe me, LADY! *your* happiness will be essential to *hers*.

'God give you happiness! *Harriet prays for it!* My next to divine monitress, it *shall* be my study to make him happy!

'But, most excellent of women, *have* you *regrets?* Regrets, which can only be lessened by the joy you will have in his happiness!—And with another!

'Superlative goodness!

'Why, why, when he would allow to you the exercise of your religion, and only insists on the like liberty, are the obstacles you hint at *invincible!*'

O Sir! I can pursue this subject no further. Thus far an irresistible impulse carried me.

How should I be able to stand before this lady, were the visit she was so earnest to be allowed to make to England to take place; yet, in such a case, with what pleasure should I pay my reverence to her *mind* in her *person!*

And does SHE, do her *family*, do YOU, Sir, wish us *speedily* ONE?—Are you not satisfied with the given month?—Is not a month, Sir, *your declaration so lately made*, a short term? (And let me ask you, but within parentheses, Do you not, on an occasion so *very* delicate, in your limited *three* days after your return to us, treat the not insensible Harriet a little more—Help me, Sir, to a word—than might have been expected from a man so *very* polite?)—And can you so generously, yet so seriously, ask me, From *which* parts of the nuptial life, the LAST (What a dreadful idea do you raise in that solemn word!) or the FIRST, I would deduct the week's or

fortnight's supposed delay?—O Sir! what a way of putting it is this!—Thus I answer—'From *neither!*'. *My* honour is *your* honour. Determine YOU, most generous of men, for your

HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER XXXVI.

MISS JERVOIS TO SIR CHARLES GRANDISON.

HONOURED SIR, Tuesday, October 31.

YOU will think your ward very bold to address you by letter; especially as she is a very poor inditer, and as you are in town: but her heart is in trouble, and she must write; and must beg the favour of you, the most indulgent guardian that ever poor orphan had, to answer her by pen and ink. For whether you can forgive her or not, she will be equally incapable of bearing your goodness, or your displeasure. How weakly I express myself! I find I shall write worse to you, than to any-body else, because I wish to write best. But I have great awe, and no genius. I am a poor girl in *every* sense; as you shall hear by-and-by. I hope you won't be *very* angry with me. If you are, I shall be worse than poor—I shall be miserable.

But to come before my guardian as a delinquent, when I have ambition enough to wish to shine in his eyes, if so it could have been!—It is a very great mortification indeed!—If you were to acquit me, I shall have had great punishment in that thought.

But to open my troubled heart to you—Yet how shall I? I thought to tell it you yesterday; but for my life I could not. Did you not observe me once, Sir, hanging upon the back of your chair, unable to

stand in your sight? O how I felt my face glow!—*Then* it *was* I thought to have spoken my mind: but you were so kind, so good to me, I could not, might I have had the world. You took my hand—I shall be very bold to repeat it; but am always so proud of your kind notice, that I can't help it: and you said, drawing me gently to you, 'Why keeps my Emily behind me? What can I do for my Emily! Tell me, child: Is there any thing I can do for my ward?' Yet, though the occasion was so fair, I could not tell you. But I shall tire you, before I come to the point (to the *fault*, I should say) that has emboldened me to write.

This then is the truth of the matter:

My poor mother, Sir, is very good now, you know. You have taken from her all her cares about this world: she and her husband live together happily and elegantly: they want for nothing; and are grown quite religious: so that they have leisure to think of their souls good. They make me cry for joy, whenever I go to them. They pray for you, and heap blessings upon you; and cry to think they ever offended you.

But, Sir, I took it into my head, knowing it was a vast way for them to go from Soho to somewhere in Moorfields to hear the preacher they admire so much, and coach-hire, and charities, and *contributions*, of one kind or other (for their minister has no establishment) and old debts paying off, that at present, though I believe they are frugal enough, they can't be much aforehand—So, thought I, shall I ride in my guardian's coach, at one time, in Lady G.'s at another, in Lady L.'s at another, though so much better able to walk than my poor mother: while she is growing into years, and when infirmities are coming on; and my guardian's example before me, *so* opening to one's heart?—I ventured, therefore,

unknown to my mother and her husband, unknown to any-body, by way of surprise, to bespeak a plain neat chariot, and agreed for a coachman, and a pair of horses; for I had about 130 guineas by me when I bespoke it. Out of this, thought I (which is my own money, without account) I shall be able to spare enough for the first half year's expences; after which, they will be in circumstances to keep it on: and as quarters come round, thought I, I will stint myself, and throw in something towards it; and then my poor mother and her husband can go to serve God, and take sometimes an airing, or so, where they please; and make an appearance in the world, as the mother of the girl who is intitled to so large a fortune. And I don't grudge Mr. O'Hara; for he is vastly tender of my mother now: which must be a great comfort to her, you know, Sir, now she is come to be sorry for past things, and apt to be very spiritless, when she looks back—Poor dear woman!

But here, Sir, was the thing: Believing it became me, as Lady L. Lady G. and Mrs. Eleanor Grandison, intended to shew their respect to you, on a certain happy occasion, by new clothes, to shew mine the same way; I went to the mercer's, and was so tempted by two patterns, that, not knowing which to chuse, I bought of both; not thinking, at the time, of the bespoken chariot. To be sure I ought to have consulted Lady L. or Lady G.; but, foolish creature as I was, I must be for surprising them too, with my fine fancy.

Then I laid out a good deal more than I intended, in millinery matters; not but I had my pennyworths for my penny: but the milliners are so very obliging; they shew one this pretty thing, and that fashionable one; and are so apt to praise one's taste; and one is so willing to believe them, and to be thought

mighty clever; that there is no resisting the vanity they raise. I own all my folly: I ever will, Sir, when I am guilty of any greater silliness than ordinary; for I have no bad heart, I hope, though I am one of the flowers I once heard you compare some of us to, who are late before they blow into discretion.

But now, good Sir, came on my distress: for the bespoken chariot was ready; ready sooner, by a fortnight, than I expected. I thought my quarter would be nearer ended; and I had made a vast hole in my money. I pulled up a courage; I had need of it: and borrowed fifty guineas of Lady G.; but, from this foolish love of surprises, cared not to tell her for what. And having occasion to pay two or three bills (I was a thoughtless creature, to be sure) which, unluckily, though I had asked for them before, were brought in just then, I borrowed another sum, but *yet* told not Lady G. for what; and the dear lady, I believe, thought me an extravagant girl: I saw she did, by her looks.

But, however, I caused the new chariot to be brought privately to me. I went in it, and it carried me to Soho; and there, on my knees, made my present to my mother.

But do you think, Sir, that she and Mr. O'Hara, when I confessed that I had not consulted you upon it, and that neither Lady L. nor Lady G. nor yet Mrs. Eleanor Grandison, knew a syllable of the matter, would accept of it? They would not: but yet they both cried over me for joy, and blessed me.

It is put up somewhere—And there it lies, till I have obtained your pardon first, and your direction afterwards. And what shall I do, if you are angry at your poor ward, who has done so inconsiderate a thing, and run herself into debt?

Chide me, honoured Sir, if you please. Indeed you never *yet* did chide me. But yours will be chidings of love; of *paternal* love, Sir.

But if you are angry with me more than a day; if you give me reason to believe you think meanly of me, though, alas! I may deserve it; and that this rashness is but a prelude to other rash or conceited steps (for that is the fear which most terrifies me) and is therefore to be resented with severity; then will I fly to my dear Miss Byron, that now is!—And if *she* cannot soften your displeasure, and restore me to your *good opinion*—(mere pardon will not be enough for your truly penitent ward) then will I say, Burst, heart! Ingrateful, inconsiderate Emily, thou hast offended thy guardian! What is there left in this life, that is worth thy cares!

And now, Sir, I have laid my troubled heart open before you. I know you will not so much blame the thing, even should you not approve of it, as the manner; doing it (after you had been so extremely generous and considerate to my mother) without consulting either you, or your sisters. O my vanity and conceit! They, they, have misled me. They never shall again, whether you forgive me, or not.

But, good, indulgent, honoured Sir, my guardian, my protector, let not my punishment be the reversing of the gracious grant which my heart has been so long wishing to obtain, and which you had consented to, of being allowed to live immediately in your own eye, and in the presence of my dear Miss Byron, that now is. This rash action should rather induce you to confirm than reverse it. And I promise to be very good. I ever loved her. I shall add filial honour, as I may say, to my love of her. I never will do any thing without consulting her: and but what you, the kindest guardian that ever poor orphan had, would wish me to do.

And now, Sir, honour me with a few lines from your own hand; were it but to shew me that this impertinence has not so far tired you, as (should

you think it just to banish me from your presence for *some time*) to make you discourage applications to you, by pen and ink, from, Sir,

Your truly sorrowful ward,
and ever obliged and grateful
EMILY JERVOIS.

LETTER XXXVII.

SIR CHARLES GRANDISON TO MISS JERVOIS.

Wednesday, November 1.

I WRITE to the dear child of my tenderest cares, because she requests me to write: else, I had hastened to her in person, to comfort her doubting heart; and to assure her, that nothing but a fault premeditated, and persisted in, that might have affected her present or future reputation, and consequently her happiness, could make me, for half an hour, offended with her. Your good intentions, my dear child, will ever be your security with me. Men, as well as women, are often misled by their love of surprises; but the greatest surprise my Emily could give me, would be, if she could do any *one* thing that would shew a faulty heart.

Once more, my dear, pay your duty to your mother, in the chariot which has been the causeless occasion of so much concern to you; and tell her, and Mr. O'Hara, that they have greatly obliged me in declining the acceptance of the chariot, so dutifully presented, till they knew my mind: but that, not so much in the compliment paid to me as your *guardian*, as because it has given me an opinion of their own generosity and discretion. Tell them, that I greatly approve of this instance of your duty

to your mother, and of your regard, for her sake, to Mr. O'Hara: tell them, that I join with my ever-amiable ward in requesting their acceptance of it; and do you, my dear, tell Miss Jervois, that I greatly honour her for this new instance of the goodness of her heart.

I inclose a note, and will, to make you easy, carry it to its proper account, that will enable you to pay the debt which you, with so dutiful an intention, have contracted.—Forgive you, my dear! I love, I admire, you for it. I will not have you *stint* yourself, as you call it, in order to contribute to the future expence of the chariot. The present is but a handsome one, respecting your fortune. Be therefore, for your mother's life, the whole expence yours; and it may possibly contribute not a little to the ease of mind of both, (as they now live together not unhappily) if you have the goodness to assure Mr. O'Hara, that you are so well satisfied with his kind treatment of your mother, that you will, on supposition of the continuance of it, before you enter into engagements which may limit your own power, or make your will dependent on that of another person, secure a handsome provision for him, for his life, in case he survive your mother.

I thank you, my dearest ward, for the affection you express for my beloved Miss Byron. She loves you so tenderly, that it would have been a concern to me, had she not engaged *your* love and confidence. You highly oblige me by promising to consult her on all material occasions. The benefit *you* will receive from her prudent advice and example, and the delight *she* will receive from your company, will be a happiness to all three. My Emily may depend upon every thing to make it completely so, that shall be in the power of

Her faithful friend, and servant,

CHARLES GRANDISON.

LETTER XXXVIII.

MISS JERVOIS TO SIR CHARLES GRANDISON.

Thursday, November 2.

A FEW lines, Sir; a very few—Not to shew my vanity, my pride, in being allowed to write to my guardian; nor to presume to draw him into an intercourse of letters. No, Sir, I write only to thank you; which I do a thousand thousand times, for the ease, the joy, you have given to my heart. O how I dreaded to open your letter! But I could not have expected it to be so *very* indulgent to a faulty girl. Not *one* rebuke! O Sir! how *very* good you are! And to send me the money to clear my debts! To bid me make my present! In so *gracious* a manner to bid me! And to put me upon promising a provision for life for Mr. O'Hara, if he survive my mother; which will prevent their thinking themselves obliged to live more narrowly while they are together, in order to save, in view of such an unhappy event!—I flew to them, with the good news—I read the whole letter to them. O how their hearts blessed you at their eyes, for they could not presently speak; and how my tears mingled with theirs! O Sir, you made us all infants!—I, for my part, am still a baby!—Did I ever cry so much for grief, as you have made me cry for joy?—It is well something now-and-then comes to check one's joy; there would be no bearing it, else. But I shall encroach on your precious time. Thank you, thank you, Sir, a hundred thousand times. My mother is happy! Mr. O'Hara is happy! My Miss Byron will soon be the happiest of all human beings, thank God!—You, my guardian, must be one of the happiest of men!

May every-body else be happy that you wish to be so! and then how happy will be, good Sir,

Your dutiful ward, and obliged servant,
ever to be commanded,
EMILY JERVOIS.

They say you set out for Northamptonshire next *Monday* or *Tuesday*, at furthest. Lord bless me!—Lord bless you! I would say—And bless every body you love!—Amen!—for ever and ever.

LETTER XXXIX.

MISS BYRON TO LADY G.

Thursday, November 2.

I HAVE laid before you, my dear Lady G. the letters of your brother and Signor Jeronymo; as also my answer to that of your brother: my spirits never were so unequal. All joy at one time; apprehension at another; that something will still happen. —Greville is reported to be *so* gloomy, *so* silent! He hates me, he says.—And here, unexpectedly, is poor Mr. Orme returned. Amended in his health a little, those who have seen him say, and he thinks so—I am glad of it. And here are we sitting in judgment, my aunt lady-president, on the patterns you have sent: my uncle too will have his opinion be taken—And Mr. Deane, who threatened he would not come to Selby-house till the settlements were to be signed, or read—I cannot tell *what*—will be here on Saturday.

* *

Mr. Orme has desired leave to visit me to-morrow. My uncle *so* hurries my spirits; not with his

raillery, as he used to do—but with his joy. He talks of nothing but the coming down of your brother, and the limited three days after; and numbers the days, nay, the hours, as they fly: for he supposes Sir Charles will be here on Monday, at furthest; and calls that a delay of particular grace and favour to me. For has he not told you, said he, that nothing after Friday can, on his part, detain him from us?

But, Lady G. will he not write to my last before he comes? Say my uncle what he pleases, your brother can't be down before Saturday se'nnight, at soonest.

Your fancy and Lady L.'s determine us. My aunt has undertaken this province: she therefore will write to you what she thinks fit. Is there not too much glare in the flowered silver, as you describe it? Don't, my dear, let me be a bride in a masquerade habit. Humility becomes persons of some degree. We want not glare: we are *known* to be able to afford rich dresses—need them not, therefore, to give us consequence: simplicity only can be elegance. Let me not be gaudy: let not fancy, or art, or study, be seen in my dresses. Something must be done, I grant, on our *appearance*; for an appearance we must not dispense with here in the country, whatever you people of quality may do in town. But let me not, I beseech you, or as little as possible, be marked out for a *lustre;* and be so good as to throw in a hint to this purpose to the dear busy girls here, as from yourselves; for they are exercising their fancies, as if I were to be a queen of the May. Your authorities will support me, if they give me cause to differ in opinion from them.

* *

Miss Orme has just been with me. She confirms her brother's amendment. She is sorry that his

impatience has brought him over, when the climate was so favourable to him. She says, I shall find him sincerely disposed to congratulate me on my happy prospect; of which she has given him ample particulars. He could not, she says, but express himself pleased, that neither Fenwick nor Greville, but that one of so superior a character, is to be the man.

What greater felicity can a young creature propose to herself, in the days of courtship, than to find every one in her family, and out of it, applauding her choice? Could I, a few weeks ago, have thought —But hushed be vanity! Pride, withdraw! Meek-eyed humility, stand forth!—Am I indeed to be the happiest of women? Will nothing happen—O no, no! Heaven will protect your brother—Yet this Greville is a trouble to me. Not because of my horrid dream; I am not so superstitious as to let that disturb me: but from a hint he gave Miss Orme.

She met him this morning at a neighbouring lady's. He thus accosted her: I understand, madam, that your brother is returned. He is a happy man. Just in time, to see Miss Byron married. Fenwick, a dog! is gone to howl at Carlisle, on the occasion. Your brother, Miss Orme, and I have nothing to do but howl in recitative, to each other, here.

My brother, Mr. Greville, answered Miss Orme, I am sure, will behave like a man on the occasion: nor can you have reason to howl, as you call it. Sir Charles Grandison is *your* particular friend, you know.

True, Miss Orme, affecting to laugh off this hit, I thought I could have braved it out; but now the matter comes near, it sticks here, just here, pointing to his throat: I cannot get it through my gizzard.

Plaguy hard of digestion! making faces, in his light way.

But will your brother, proceeded he, be contented to stay within the noise of the bells, which will (in a few days perhaps) be set a ringing, for ten miles round? Sir Charles drives on at a d—nable rate, I hear. 'But he must let me die decently, I can tell him: we will not part for ever with the flower of our country, without conditions.' Shall *you* see the Siren, madam? if you do, tell her, that I have no chance for peace, but in hating her heartily. But (whispering Miss Orme) bid her NOT TO BE TOO SECURE.

I was strangely struck with these last words; for my spirits were not high before. I repeated them; I dwelt upon them, and wept.—Fool that I was! But I soon recollected myself; and desired Miss Orme not to take notice of my tender folly.

Friday.

I have had a visit from Mr. Orme. He has given *me* some pleasure. I added not to *his* melancholy. He asked me several interesting questions, which I would not have answered any other man, as I told him. I shall always value Mr. Orme. Your brother is the most generous of men: but were he not so very generous, he ought to allow for my *civility* to this worthy man; since I can applaud *him* with my whole heart, for *loving* the noble Clementina. What a narrow-hearted creature must I be, if I did not?—But as a woman's honour is of a more delicate nature, I believe, than a man's, with regard to *personal* love; so perhaps, if *this* be allowed me, a man may be as jealous of a woman's *civility* (in general cases, I mean) as a woman may be of a man's *love* to another object. This may sound strange, at first hearing, Lady G. but I know what

I mean.—Nobody else does, Harriet, perhaps you will say.—But they would, I reply, if I were to explain myself; which, at present, if you apprehend me not, I have no inclination to do.

How did this worthy man praise Sir Charles Grandison! He must see that my pride, no, not pride, my gratitude, was raised by it, as well to the *praiser* as *praised.* He concluded with a blessing on us both, which he uttered in a different manner from what that Balaam Greville uttered his: it was followed with tears, good man! and he left me almost unable to speak. How grateful in our ears are the praises bestowed on those whom we fondly love!

Lucy thinks I had best go to my grandmamma's before he comes down; and that he should visit me there from Selby-house. Neither my aunt nor I are of this opinion: but that he should himself go to Shirley-manor, and visit us from thence. For is not Selby-house my usual place of residence? My grandmamma will be delighted with his company, and conversation. But as he cannot think of coming down before the latter end of next week, at the soonest, it is time enough to consider of these things. Yet *can* a young creature, the awful solemnity so near, and with a man whom she prefers to all others, find room in her head for any other topic?

I have a letter from my good Mrs. Reeves. She and my cousin are so full of this agreeable subject, that they invite themselves down to us; and hope we will excuse them for their earnestness on this occasion. They are prodigiously earnest. I wonder my cousin can think of leaving her little boy. My aunt says, "there is no denying them. *Your* presence, my Charlotte, I own, would be a high satisfaction to me: yet you would be a little un-

manageable, I doubt. There can be no hope of Lady L.'s: but if there were, neither she, nor any-body else, could keep you orderly.—Poor dear Emily!—My aunt wishes, that we *could* have had her with us: but, for her own sake, it must not be. How often do I revolve that reflection of your brother's; that, in our happiest prospects, the sighing heart will confess imperfection!—But I will not add another word, after I have assured you, my dearest ladies, that I am, and ever will be,

Your grateful and most affectionate
humble servant,
HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER XL.

SIR CHARLES GRANDISON TO MISS BYRON.

Friday, November 3.

Receive, dearest, loveliest, of women, the thanks of a most grateful heart, for your invaluable favour of Wednesday last. Does my *Harriet* (already, methinks, I have sunk the name of Byron into that of Grandison), do Mrs. Shirley, Mrs. Selby, think, that I have treated one of the most delicate of female minds indelicately, in the *wish* (not the *prescription*) I have presumed to signify to the beloved of my heart; that within three days after my *permitted* return to Northamptonshire, I may be allowed to receive at the altar the greatest blessing of my life? I would not be thought ungenerous. I signified my wishes; but I told you, in the same letter, that your *cheerful* compliance was to me the great desirable. In every-thing, from the date of the condescending letter before me, to the last of my life, shall your wishes determine mine. I will have

your whole heart in the grant of every request I make to you, or you shall have the cheerful acquiescence of mine with your will. Permit me to say, that the family punctilio was not out of my thoughts, when I expressed my own ardent wishes to you. Does not the world about you expect, on the return of the happy man, a speedy solemnization? I imagined, that whether he be permitted to make the place of his abode Selby-house or Shirley-manor, you would not that the happy day should be long deferred, which should give him rank as one of the dear family.

Our equipages, my dearest life, are all in great forwardness. In tenderness to you, I have forborne to consult you upon some parts of them; as my regard for your judgment would otherwise have obliged me to do. The settlements are all ready. Our good Mr. Deane is ready to attend you with them. Allow me, then, to do myself the honour of presenting myself before you at Selby-house, on Tuesday next. I will leave it to you to distinguish the happiest day of my life, whether within the succeeding three, four, five, or even six of my return.

If I have not your commands to the contrary, Tuesday morning then, if not Monday night, shall present to you the most ardent and sincere of men, pouring out his grateful vows for the invaluable favour of Wednesday's date, which I consider in the sacred light of a plighted love; and, as such, have given it a place next my heart.

My most respectful compliments to all whom we both so justly hold dear, conclude me, dearest madam,

Your most grateful, obliged,
and ever-affectionate,
CHARLES GRANDISON.

LETTER XLI.

MISS BYRON TO LADY G.

Monday morning, November 6.

I SEND you, my dearest Lady G. a copy of your brother's letter of Friday last. Lucy has transcribed it for you. Lucy is very obliging. She desires to be allowed to correspond with you; and makes a merit of these transcriptions for an introduction: that is her view. I give you fair notice of it, that you may either check or encourage her, as you think fit.

Have I not cause to think your brother a little out of the way in his resolution of so sudden a return?—This night perhaps, or to-morrow morning —I am vexed, my dear, because he is such an anticipater, that he leaves not to me the merit of obliging him *beyond* his expectation. However, I shall rejoice to see him. The moment he enters the room where I am, he can have no faults.

My aunt, who thinks he is full hasty, is gone to dine with my grandmamma, and intends to settle with that dear parent every-thing for his reception at Shirley-manor. My uncle, at Mr. Orme's invitation, is gone to dine with that worthy man.

Monday afternoon.

O my dearest Lady G.! what shall we do! All quarrels are at an end! all petulance, all folly!—I may never, never, be his at all!—I may, before the expected time of his arrival, be the most miserable of women!—Your brother, best of men!—may be—ah—my Charl—

* *

Terrified to death, my pen fell from my fingers

—I fainted away—Nobody came near me. I know I was not long insensible—My terrors broke through even the fit I fell into—Nothing but death itself could make me long insensible, on such an occasion —O how I shall terrify you!—Dearest Lady G.—But here, here comes my Lucy—Let her give the occasion of my anguish.

THE FOLLOWING WRITTEN BY MISS LUCY SELBY.

At my cousin's request, while she is laid down, I proceed, my good Lady G. to account to you for her terrors, and for mine also—Dear creature!—But don't be too much terrified: God, we hope, God, we *pray*, will protect your brother! Mr. Greville cannot be capable of the shocking mischief, barbarity, villany, which it is apprehended he has in view: God will protect your brother!

Here, a note was brought from an *anonymous* hand —I don't know what I write—from an *unknown* hand; signifying, that Mr. Greville was heard to threaten the life of your brother; and we are told, by more than one, that he is moody, and in a bad way as to his mind. And he left his house this morning; so the note says (and *that* he *certainly* did) and was seen to take the London road, with several servants, and others—And the dear Harriet has distracted herself and me with her apprehensions. My aunt out, my uncle out, none but maid-servants at home. We, before she came up to her closet, ran up and down, directing, and undirecting; and she promised to go up, and try to compose herself, till my uncle came from *the Park*, where he is to dine with Mr. Orme. He is sent for—Thank God my uncle is come!—

BY MISS BYRON.

And what, my dear Lady G. can his coming sig-

nify? , Lucy is gone down to shew him the anonymous writer's note. Dear, dear Sir! Lord of my wishes! forgive me all my petulance. Come safe —God grant it!—Come safe! And hand and heart I will be yours, if you require it, to-morrow morning!

* *

Here, Lady G. follows the copy of the alarming note. I broke the seal. It was thus directed:

TO GEORGE SELBY, ESQ. WITH SPEED, SPEED, SPEED.

HONOURED SIR,

A very great respecter of one of the most generous and noblest of men (Sir Charles Grandison, I mean) informs you, that his life is in great danger. He over-heard Mr. Greville say, in a rageful manner, as by his voice, 'I never will allow such a prize to be carried from me. He shall die the death,' and swore to it. He was a little in wine, it is true; and I should have disregarded it for that reason, had I not informed myself that he is set out with armed men this morning. Make what use you please of this: you never will know the writer. But love and reverence to the young baronet is all my motive. So help me God!

Two of my uncle's tenants, severally, saw the shocking creature on the London road, with servants. What will become of me, before morning, if he arrive not this night in safety!

Monday night, eleven.

My uncle dispatched two servants to proceed on the London road as far as they could go for daylight. He himself rode to Mr. Greville's. Mr. Greville had been out all day, and well attended—Expected, however, to return at night.—To prepare

for his escape (who knows?) after the blackest of villanies. My aunt is in tears; my uncle recollects aggravating circumstances. Our preparations, your brother's preparations; Mr. Deane's expected arrival of to-morrow—Lucy weeps; Nancy wrings her hands—Your Harriet is in silent anguish—She can weep no more!—She can write no more!

Tuesday morning, eight o'clock, November 7.

What a dreadful night have I had! Not a wink of sleep.

And nobody stirring. Afraid to come down, I suppose, for fear of seeing each other. My eyes are swelled out of my head.—I wonder my uncle is not down. *He* might give orders about something—I know not what. What dreadful visions had I ready, as it seemed, to continue my disturbance, could I have closed my eyes to give seeming form to the flying shadows! *Waking* dreams: for I was broad awake: Sally sat up with me. Such startings! such absences:—I never was so before. Such another night would I not have for the world! I can only write. Yet *what* do I write? To what purpose?—You must not see what I have written. Now on my knees, praying, vowing: now—*O my Lucy!*

* *

Lucy entered just here—Nancy followed her—Nancy tormented me with her reveries of the past night: my aunt is not well; she has not slept. My uncle fell into a dose, about his usual rising-time: he has had no rest. My grandmamma must not know the occasion of our grief, till it cannot be kept from her—*If*—But no more—Dreadful *If*—

LETTER XLII.

MISS BYRON. IN CONTINUATION.

Tuesday, twelve o'clock, November 7.

In a small hand, under the superscription of the inner cover.

My dearest Lady G. pray read the first page of this letter, before you open the other dreadful one, sealed with five seals, and stitched to the cover (that it may not slide *officiously* into your hands). Lucy will have me send the whole of that shocking letter. Against my judgment, I comply.

We met this morning soul-less, and forlorn, all equally unable either to give or receive consolation. The officious note was taken up, laid down, taken up again; the hand endeavoured to be guessed at: and at last it was concluded, to dispatch a servant to Mr. Greville's, to learn news of the supposed traitor.

But behold! before the servant could return, in a riding-dress, having alighted at the outward gate, entered the hall your noble brother. I was the first whom he saw; the first who saw him. I was just going out, intending (yet hardly knowing my intention) to walk in the elm-row fronting the house, in order to shorten the way of the returning servant with news.

He approached me with tender respect. Something he said, and more he intended to say; excusing his early return, and thanking me for my favour o[f] the Wednesday before; when my joyful surpris[e] overpowered both my speech and senses.—An[d] what will you say to me, when I tell you, that, o[n] my recovery, I found myself in his arms, mine claspe[d] about his neck?

He was surprised at my emotion. Well he mig[ht]

—Every one, in a moment, crowded about him—My aunt also folded her arms around him—'Welcome, welcome, welcome, was all she could, at the instant, say.

I, utterly abashed, trembling, and doubting my feet, motioned to quit the hall for the parlour—But nobody minded me; all were busied in congratulating the joy of every heart; till Sally presenting herself, I leaned upon her, and staggering to the parlour, threw myself into an elbow-chair.

Your brother, attended by all my friends, followed me in. My heart again bid him welcome, though my eye could not, at that instant, bear his. He took my hand, as I sat, between both his, and in the most respectful manner, pressing it with his lips, besought me to compose myself.

They had hinted to him in the hall, the cause of all our emotions—They had as much reason to blush, as I had.—Nancy, it seems, even Nancy, snatched his hand, and kissed it, in raptures. How dear is he to us all! He sees it, now: there can be no reserves to him, after this. Punctilio! *family-punctilio!* mentioned he in his letter!—We have now no pretensions to it—

His eyes shone with grateful sensibility. Look upon me, loveliest of women, said he, and tell me, you forgive me, for my early return: but, though returned, I am entirely at your devotion.

Lucy says, she never saw me more to my advantage. I looked upon him, as he bid me, smiling through my tears. He stole gently my handkerchief from my half-hid face; with it he dried my unaverted cheek, and put it, she says, in his bosom. I have lost it.

My uncle and aunt withdrew with him, and acquainted him with all particulars. To them he acknowledged, in words of eloquent love, my uncle

said, the honour done him by me, and by us all, in the demonstrations we had given of our tender regard for him.

I was, by the time of their return to us, pretty well recovered. Sir Charles approached me, without taking notice of the emotion I had been in. Mr. and Mrs. Selby tell me, said he, to me, that I am to be favoured with a residence at our venerable Mrs. Shirley's. This, though a high honour, looks a little distant; so would the next door, if it were not under the same roof with my Miss Byron: but, smiling tenderly upon me, I shall presume to hope, that this very distance will turn to my account. Mrs. Shirley's Harriet cannot decline paying her accustomed duty to the best of grandmothers.

Bowing, I shall not, Sir, said I, be the more backward to pay my duty to my grandmamma, for your obliging her with your company.

Thus, resumed he, ardently kissing my hand, do I honour to myself for the honour done me. How poor is man, that he cannot express his gratitude to the object of his vows, for obligations conferred, but by owing to her new obligation!

Then turning to my aunt—It is incumbent upon me, madam, said he, to pay my early devoirs to Mrs. Shirley, the *hospitable* Mrs. Shirley, repeated he, smiling; which looked as if he expected to be here. *There*, besides, (looking pleasantly upon my aunt) I may be asked—*here* I am not—to break my fast.

This set us all into motion. My uncle ran out to look after Sir Charles's servants, who, it seems, in our hurry, were disregarded: their horses in the court-yard; three of them walking about, waiting their master's orders. My uncle was ready, in the true taste of old English hospitality, to *pull* them in.

Chocolate was instantly brought for their master; and a dish for each of us. We had made but a poor breakfast, any of us. I could get nothing down before my aunt put a second dish into my hand: I took her kind meaning, and presented it to Sir Charles. How gratefully did he receive it! Will it *always* be so, Lady G.? My love, heightened by my duty, shall not, when the obligation is doubled, make me less deserving of his politeness, if I can help it.

But still this dreadful note, and Greville's reported moodiness, made us uneasy. The servant we sent returned, with information that Mr. Greville came home late last night. He was not stirring, it seems, though eleven o'clock, when the servant reached his house. He is said to be not well; and, as one servant of his told ours, so very fretful, and ill-tempered, that they none of them know how to speak to him. God grant—But let me keep to myself such of my apprehensions as are founded on conjecture—Why should I not hope the best? Is not your beloved brother at present safe? And is he not the care of Providence?—I humbly trust he is.

Sir Charles took the note. I think I have seen the hand, said he: if I have, I shall find out the writer. I dare say, it is written with a good intention.

My uncle and we all expressed, some in words, some by looks, our apprehensions.

There cannot possibly be room for any, said Sir Charles; always present to himself. Mr. Greville loves Miss Byron. It is no wonder, as his apprehensions of losing all hopes of her for ever grow stronger, that he should be uneasy. He would make but an ill compliment to her merit, and his own sincerity, if he were not. But such a stake as he has in his country, he cannot have desperate

intentions. I remember to his advantage, his last behaviour here. I will make him a visit. I must engage Mr. Greville to rank me in the number of his friends.

What he said gave us comfort. No wonder if we women love courage in a man: we *ought*, if it be true courage, like that of your excellent brother. After all, my dear, I think we must allow a natural superiority in the minds of men over women. Do we not want protection; and does not that want imply inferiority?—Yet if there be two sorts of courage, an *acquired* and a *natural;* why may not the former be obtained by women, as well as by men, were they to have the same education? NATURAL courage may belong to either. Had Miss Barnevelt, for example, had a boy's education, she would have probably challenged her man, on provocation given; and he might have come off but poorly.

But we have more silly antipathies than men, which help to keep us down: whether those may not sometimes be owing to affectation, do you, Lady G. who, however, have as little affectation as ever woman had, determine. A frog, a toad, a spider, a beetle, an earwig, will give us mighty pretty tender terror; while the heroic men will trample the insect under foot, and look the more brave for their barbarity, and for our *delicate* screaming. But, for an *adventure*, if a lover get us into one, we frequently leave him a great way behind us. Don't you think so, Lady G.?—Were not this Greville still in my head, methinks I could be as pert as ever.

Sir Charles told us, that he should have been with us last night, but for a visit he was obliged to pay to Sir Harry Beauchamp; to make up for which hindrance, he took horse, and ordered his equipage to follow him.

He is gone to pay his duty, as he is pleased to call

it, to my grandmamma, in my uncle's coach, my uncle with him. If they cannot prevail on my grandmamma to come hither to dinner, and if she is desirous Sir Charles should dine with her, he will oblige her—*by my aunt's leave*, was his address to her. But perhaps she will have the goodness to add her company to his, as she knows *that* will give us all double pleasure: she loves to give pleasure. Often does the dear lady say, 'How can palsied age, which is but a terrifying object to youth, expect the indulgence, the love of the young and gay, if it does not study to promote those pleasures which itself was fond of in youth? Enjoy innocently your season, girls, once said she, setting half a score of us into country dances. I watch for the failure of my memory; and shall never give it over for quite lost, till I forget what were my own innocent wishes and delights in the days of my youth.'

Tuesday, five o'clock.

My uncle and Sir Charles came back to dinner; my grandmamma with them. She was so good as to give them her company, at the first word. Sir Charles, as we sat at dinner, and afterwards, saw me weak in mind, bashful, and not quite recovered; and he seemed to watch my uncle's eyes, and so much diverted him and all of us, that my uncle had not opportunity to put forth, as usual. How did this kind protection assure me! I thought myself quite well; and was so cheerfully silent when Sir Charles talked, that my grandmamma and aunt, who had placed me between them, whispered me severally—You look charmingly easy, love—You look like yourself, my dear. Yet still this mischievous Greville ran in my head.

My uncle took notice, that Sir Charles had said, he guesed at the writer of the note. He wished he

would give him an *item*, as he called it, whom he thought of.

You observe, Sir, answered Sir Charles, that the writer says, Mr. Greville was in wine. He professes to be an encourager of the people of the George in Northampton. He often appoints company to meet him there. I imagine the writer to be the head waiter of the house: the bills delivered me in, seem to have been written in such a hand as the note, as far as I can carry the hand-writing in my eye.

Ads-heart, said my uncle, that's undoubtedly right: your name's up, Sir, I can tell you, among men, women, and children. This man, in his note, calls you (Look, else!) the most generous and noble of men. He says, we *shall never know the writer!* —Ads-dines! the man must deal in art magic, that conceals himself from you, if you have a mind to find him out.

Well, but, said Lucy, if this *be* so, I am concerned at the reality of the information. Such threatenings as Mr. Greville throws out, are not to be slighted. Very true, said my uncle. Mr. Deane and I (Mr. Deane will certainly be here by-and-by) will go, and discourse with Greville himself to-morrow, please the Lord.

Sir Charles begged that this matter might be left to his management. Mr. Greville and I, said he, are upon such a foot, as whether he be so sincerely my friend as I am his, or not, will warrant a visit to him; and he cannot but take it as a civility, on my return into these parts.

Should he be affronting, Sir Charles? said my uncle—

I can have patience, if he should. He cannot be grossly so.

I know not *that*, replied my uncle: Mr. Greville is a *roister!*

Well, dear Mr. Selby, leave this matter to me. *Were* there to be danger; the way to avoid it, is not to appear to be afraid of it. One man's fear gives another courage. I have no manner of doubt of being able to bring Mr. Greville with me to an amicable dish of tea, or to dinner, which you please, to-morrow.—Ads-heart, Sir, I wish not to see at *either*, the wretch who could threaten the life of a man so dear to us all.

Sir Charles bowed to my uncle for his sincere compliment. I have nothing to do, said he, but to invite myself either to breakfast, or dine with *him*. His former scheme of appearing to the world well with me, in order to save his spirit, will be resumed; and all will be right.

My aunt expressed her fears, however, and looked at me, as I did at her, with a countenance, I suppose, far from being unapprehensive: but Sir Charles said, You must leave me, my dear friends, to my own methods; nor be anxious for my safety. I am not a rash man: I can pity Mr. Greville; and the man I pity, cannot easily provoke me.

We were all the easier for what the charmingly-cool, because truly-brave, man said on a subject which has given us all so much terror.

But was he not very good, my dear, not to say one word all this day of the important errand on which he came down? and to *lead* the subjects of conversation with design, as my aunt and grand-mamma both thought, as well as I, that my uncle should *not?* and to give me time to recover my spirits? Yet when he did address himself to me, never were tenderness and respect so engagingly mingled. This my uncle observed, as well as my aunt and Lucy. How the duce, said he, does this Sir Charles manage it? He has a way no man but him ever found out—He can court without speech:

he can take one's heart, and say never a word. Hay, Harriet! looking archly.

* *

Mr. Deane is come—In charming health and spirits—Thank God! With what cordiality did Sir Charles and he embrace each other!

Sir Charles attended my grandmamma home: so we had not his company at supper. No convenience without its contrary. He is her own son: she is his own parent. Such an unaffected love, on both sides!—Such a sweetly-easy, yet respectful, familiarity between them! What additional pleasures must a young woman in my situation have, when she can consider herself as the bond of union between the family she is of, and that she is entering into! How dreadful, on the contrary, must be *her* case, who is the occasion of propagating dissension, irreconcilable hatred, and abhorrence between her own relations and those of the man to whom she for life engages herself!

My grandmother and Sir Charles were no sooner gone, than my uncle began to talk with Mr. Deane on the subject that is nearest all our hearts. I was afraid the conversation would not be managed to my liking; and having too just an excuse to ask leave to withdraw, from bad, or rather no rest, last night, I made use of it; and here in my closet (preparing now, however, for it) am I

Your ever-affectionate

HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER XLIII.

MISS BYRON. IN CONTINUATION.

Wednesday morning, November 8.

SIR Charles let my grandmother come hither by herself. He is gone to visit that Greville. We are all in pain for him: but Mr. Deane comforts us.

After breakfast, thus began my uncle upon me.

Here, dame Selby, are we still *at a fault*. Harriet knows not what she would be at; and you uphold her in her *nonsenses*. Delicacy! Delicacy! The duce take me, if I have any notion of it!—What a *pize* are you about?

Dear Sir! why am I blamed? said I. What would you have me do, that I have *not* done?

Do! why I would have you give him his day, and keep to it; *that* I would have you do: and not shilly-shally for ever—and subject the best of men to insults. All your men will be easy and quiet, when the ceremony is over, and they know there is no remedy.

My good Mr. Selby, said my grandmamma, you now blame without reason. Sir Charles was full hasty. Harriet was a little more nice, perhaps, her lover considered, than she needed to be. Yet I don't know, but I, in her case, should have done as she did; and expected as much time as she was willing to take. It was not a *very* long one, Mr. Selby, from the declaration he made; and he is a man himself of great delicacy. Harriet very readily acknowledged to him the preference she gave him to all men; and when she found him very earnest for a short day, she, by her last letter, threw herself generously into his power. He is full of acknowledgments upon it; and so he *ought* to be. To *me*

he has said all that a man should say of his gratitude, upon the occasion; and he declared to me last night, that it was with difficulty he forbore taking advantage of her goodness to him: but that he checked himself, and led to other subjects, seeing how much the dear creature was disordered, and being apprehensive, that if he had begun upon one so interesting, or even wished to talk with her alone, he should have increased her disorder.

Oy, oy! Sir Charles is considerate; and Harriet should be grateful: but indeed my dame Selby is as silly, to the full, as Harriet. She is for having Harriet keep *her* in countenance in the dance she led me, so many years ago—Lady G. for my money. She finds you all out in your masonry.

Mr. Selby, said my aunt, I only refer myself to what Mrs. Shirley just now said.

And so don't think it worth while to hold an argument with me, I suppose?

I did not know, my dear, that you *wanted* to hold an argument.

Your servant, madam—with that sly leer—*So* like Harriet! and Harriet *so* like you!

But, Mr. Selby, said my grandmamma, will you be pleased to tell the dear child, if you think her wrong, what is the next step she should take?

Think her wrong!—Next step!—Why the next step is, as she has promised to oblige him, and to be directed by him, to keep her word; and not *hum* nor *haw* about the matter.

Mr. Deane, who had been shewn and told everything that had passed since we saw him last, said, You don't *know*, Mr. Selby, that my daughter Byron will make unnecessary parade. Sir Charles you find, in tenderness to her, asked no question yesterday; made no claim—*She* could not begin the subject.

But, said Lucy, I cannot but say, that my cousin is in *some* fault.

Look you there, now! said my uncle.

We all stared at Lucy; for she spoke and looked very seriously.

Might she not have said, proceeded she, when Sir Charles surprised her at his first arrival (what though her heart was divided between past terror, and present joy?) Here I am, Sir, at your service: Are you prepared for to-morrow?—And then made him one of her best courtesies.

Sauce-box!—Well, well, I believe I have been a little hasty in my judgment (rapping under the table with his knuckles): but I am so afraid that something will happen between the cup and the lip—Here, last night, I dreamt that Lady Clementina and he were going to be married—Give me your hand, my dear Harriet, and don't revoke the *kindness* in your last letter to him, but whatever be the day he proposes, comply, and you will win my heart for ever.

As Sir Charles *leads*, Harriet must *follow*, resumed my grandmamma. You men are sad prescribers in these delicate cases, Mr. Selby. You will be put to it, my dear love, taking my hand, before this day is over, now you seem so purely recovered. Sir Charles Grandison is not a dreaming lover. Prepare your mind, my child: you'll be put to it, I do assure you.

Why, oy; I can't but say, Sir Charles is a man—Don't you, my *lovely love*, be too much a woman;—too close a copier of your aunt Selby here!—and, as I said, you will have my heart for ever—Oy, and Sir Charles's too; for he is not one of your sorry fellows that can't distinguish between a favour and a folly.

My uncle then went out with a flourish, and took Mr. Deane with him.

We had a good deal of talk upon the important subject. The conclusion was, that I would refer Sir Charles to my grandmamma, if he were urgent for

the day, and she was vested with a discretionary power to determine for her girl.

Such of my clothes, then, as were near finished, were ordered to be produced, with some of the ornaments. They were all to sit in judgment upon them.

Surely, Lady G. these are solemn circumstances, lightly as my uncle thinks of them. Must not every thoughtful young creature, on so great a change, and for life, have conflicts in her mind, be her prospects ever so happy, as the day approaches? Of what materials must the hearts of runaways, and of fugitives to men half-strangers to them, be compounded?

My aunt has just left with me the following billet, from Sir Charles, directed to my uncle, from Mr. Greville's:

DEAR MR. SELBY,

I regret every moment that I pass out of Selby-house, or Shirley-manor: and as I have so few particular friends in these parts out of your family, I think I ought to account to you for the hours I do: nor will I, now our friendship is so unalterably fixed and acknowledged, apologize for giving myself, by this means, the consequence with your family, that every one of yours, for their single sakes, are of to me, superadded to the tenderest attachments to one dear person of it.

I found the gentleman in a less happy disposition than I expected.

It is with inexpressible reluctance that he thinks, as my happy day draws near, of giving up all hopes of an object so dear to him. He seemed strangely balancing on this subject, when I was introduced to him. He instantly proposed to me, and with some fierceness, that I would suspend all thoughts of marriage for *two* months to come, or at least for *one*.

I received his request with proper indignation. He pretended to give reasons respecting himself: I allowed not of them.

After some canvassings, he swore, that he would be complied with in *something*. His alternative was, my dining with him, and with some of his chosen friends, whom he had invited.

I have reason to think these friends are those to whom he expressed himself with violence at the George, as over-heard, I suppose, by the waiter there.

He rode out, he owned, yesterday morning, with intent to meet me; for he boasts, that he knows all my motions, and those of a certain beloved young lady. Let *him*; let *every-body*, who thinks it their concern to watch our steps, be made acquainted with them: the honest heart aims not at secrets. I should glory in receiving Miss Byron's hand, from yours, Sir, before ten thousand witnesses.

Mr. Greville had rode out the night before; he did not *say* to meet me; but he knew I was expected at Selby-house, either on Monday night, or yesterday morning: and on his return, not meeting me, he and his friends passed their night at the George, as mentioned, and rode out together in the morning —In hopes of meeting me, he said; and to engage me to suspend my happy day. Poor man! Had he been in his *right mind*, he could not have hoped (had he met me on the road) to have been *heard* on such a subject.

An act of oblivion, and thorough reconciliation, he calls it, is to pass, in presence of his expected friends.

You will not take notice of what I have hinted at, out of the family, whatever was designed.

In the temper he would have found me in, had he met me, no harm could have happened; for he is really to be pitied.

We are now perfect friends. He is full of good wishes. He talks of a visit to Lady Frampton, of a month. I write thus particularly, that I may not allow such a subject as this to interfere with that delightful one which engrosses my whole attention; and which I hope, in the evening, will be honoured with the attention of the beloved and admired of every heart, as well as that of

Your ever-obliged and affectionate

CH. GRANDISON.

Poor wicked Greville!—May he go to Lady Frampton's, or wherever else, so it be fifty miles distant from us. I shall be afraid of him, till I hear he has quitted, for a time, his seat in this neighbourhood.

What a glorious quality is courage, when it is divested of rashness! When it is founded on integrity of heart, and innocence of life and manners! But, otherwise founded, is it not rather to be called *savageness*, and *brutality?*

How much trouble have I given your brother! What dangers have I involved him in! It cannot be possible for me ever to reward him.—But the proudest heart may deem it a glory to owe obligation to Sir Charles Grandison.

LETTER XLIV.

MISS BYRON. IN CONTINUATION.

Wednesday night, November 8.

Sir Charles broke away, and came hither by our tea-time. I was in my closet, writing. They all crowded about him. He avoided particulars: only

said, that all was friendship between Mr. Greville and himself; and that Mr. Greville came with him part of the way; full of his resumed scheme, of appearing to be upon a good understanding with him, and a friend to the alliance between him and us.

Sir Charles looked about him, as if for somebody he saw not. My aunt came up to me: My dear, do you know who is come? She then gave me the above particulars. We had a summons to tea. We hastened down. He met us both at the parlour-door. O madam, said he, what precious hours have I lost!—I have been patience itself!

I congratulated him on what my aunt had told me. I found he intended, as he says in his billet, that the particulars he gave in it should answer our curiosity; and to have done with the subject. What a charming possession of himself, that he could be in such a brangle, as I may call it, and which might have had fatal consequences; yet be so wholly, and so soon, divested of the subject; and so infinitely agreeable upon half a score others, as they offered from one or other as we sat at tea!

Tea was no sooner over, but he singled me out—May I, madam, beg the favour of an half-hour's audience?

Sir, Sir! hesitated the simpleton, and was going to betray my expectation, by expressing some little reluctance; but, recollecting myself, I suffered him to lead me into the cedar-parlour. When there, seating me—Now, madam, let me again thank you, a thousand and a thousand times, for the honour of your last condescending and generous letter.

He but just touched my hand, and appeared so *encouragingly* respectful!—I must have loved him then, if I had not before.

You have, my dearest Miss Byron, a man before you, that never can be ungrateful. Believe me, my

dearest life, though I have urged you as I have, you are absolutely your own mistress of the day, and of *every day* of my life, as far as it shall be in my power to make you so. You part with power, my lovely Miss Byron, but to find it with augmentation. Only let me beseech you, now I have given it you back again, not to permit your heart to be swayed by *mere* motives of punctilio.

A charming glow had overspread his cheek; and he looked as when I beheld him in his sister's dressing-room, after he had rescued me from the hands of the then cruel, now mortified, Sir Hargrave Pollexfen.

Punctilio, *mere* punctilio, Sir, shall *not* weigh with me. What I wrote to you, I intended to comply with. My heart, Sir, is—*Yours!*—I would have said—Why would not my tongue speak it?—Had I not owned it *before* to be so? My my, I stammered, my grandmamma, Sir, and aunt—I could not at that instant, for my life, say another word.

Sweet confusion! I urge you no more on this topic, just now: I joyfully take your reference. Then drawing a chair next me, he kissed his own hand, and held it out, as it were courting mine. I yielded it to him, as by an involuntary motion; (yet my heart was forwarder than my hand.) And instead of urging the approaching day, he talked to me as if it were passed.

I have a request to make to your grandmother, your uncle and aunt, your Lucy, and our Mr. Deane; it is a very bold one: that when I have been blessed with your hand, they will be so good as to accompany their beloved Harriet, then no more Byron, but Grandison, to my family-seat, and see the beloved of every heart happily fixed, and in possession of it. The house is venerable; I will not call it old; but large and convenient. Compassion for your neigh-

bouring admirers, will induce you to support me in this request. You cannot bear, I imagine, without a lessening of your own joy (if I prove the just, the grateful man to you, that, if I know myself, I shall be) either to see at church, or in your visits, those men who preferred you to all women; or, if they forbear the one or the other, to account with a gentle sigh for their forbearance. Other women might triumph secretly on such occasions; but I, even I, the successful, the distinguished man, shall not forbear some inward pity for them. Now, madam, an excursion of a month or two, if no more, made by those dear friends, who otherwise will be loth, so soon as I wish, to part with you; will *wean*, as I may say, these unhappy men from you. Mr. Orme, Mr. Greville, will not then be obliged to quit their own houses: all your *new* relations will attend you, in turn, in the house that I always loved, and wished to settle in; your own relations with you, and witnesses of our mutual happiness. Support me, generously support me, in this proposal, when I shall be intitled, by your goodness, to make it.—Silent, my dearest love!—If I have been too early in thus opening my heart to you, do me the justice to suppose that it is owing to my wishes to pass over another interesting subject which must take place before my proposal can; and which, however, engages my whole heart.

I might well be silent: I could not find utterance for the emotions of my heart. I withdrew my hand to take my handkerchief [you have often told me, Lady G. that I was born in an April morning]; but putting it into my other hand, I gratefully (I hope not *too* fondly) laid it in his way to take it again. He did, with an air that had both veneration and gratitude in it—My dearest life, tenderly grasping it—how amiable this goodness!—You are not, I see, displeased.

Displeased!—O, Sir Charles!—But, alas! while I am too happy, the exalted lady abroad!—She! she, only—Your friend Jeronymo's last letter—

Thus brokenly did I express (what my heart was full of) her worthiness, my inferiority.

Exalted creature!—Angelic goodness! You are Clementina and Harriet, both in one: one mind certainly informs you both.

Just then came in my aunt Selby. I have, madam, said he to her, been making a request to your beloved niece: I am exceedingly earnest in it. She will be so good as to break it to you; and I hope—

O Sir! interrupted my too eager aunt, supposing it had been for the day, Mrs. Shirley has the power—

My dear aunt Selby! said I.

What have I said, love?

He caught eagerly at it—Happy mistake! said he. My dear Mrs. Selby, I thank you.

He bowed, kissed my hand, and left me, to go to my grandmamma, to inform himself of what he had to hope for, as to the day, from her.

I told my aunt what the request was; and she approved of his proposal. It will be the pride of your uncle's heart and mine, said she, to see you settled in Grandison-hall.

In less than a quarter of an hour Sir Charles returned, overjoyed, with an open billet in his hand, from the venerable parent. What short work did my grandmamma make of it! This is it:

'To me, my Harriet, you have referred the most important day of your life. May the Almighty shower down his blessings on it!

'Thursday, next week, God willing, is the day, which shall crown the happiness of us all.

Make no objections, my dearest child.

'Hasten to me, and say, You acquiesce cheerfully in the determination of

'Your ever-affectionate

'HENRIETTA SHIRLEY.'

Had you seen, my dear Charlotte, with what tender respect your brother approached me, and with what an inimitable grace he offered me the open billet, how would you have been charmed with him! The excellent Mrs. Shirley, said he, would not permit me to bring this inestimable paper folded. I have contemplated the propitious lines all the way. On my knee let me thank you, my dear Miss Byron, for your acquiescence with her determination. He kissed my hand on one knee.

He saw me disturbed [could I help it? There is something awful in the fixing of the *very* day, Lady G.; but I tried to recover myself. I would fain avoid appearing guilty of affectation in his eyes]. I will not add a word more, my angel, said he, on the joyful subject. Only tell me, shall we hasten to attend the condescending parent?

My duty to *her*, Sir, said I, (but with more hesitation than I wished) shall be an earnest of that which I am so soon, so *very* soon, to vow to *you*. And I gave him my hand.

There is no describing to you, my dear Lady G. the looks, the manner, with which it was received, by the most ardent, and yet most respectful, of lovers.

I had scarce approached my grandmamma, and begun to utter something of the *much* my heart was filled with, when my uncle and Mr. Deane (by mistake, I believe) were admitted.

Well, let us know every thing about it, said my uncle—I hope Sir Charles is pleased. I hope—

The day was named to him.

Well, well, thank God! And he spoke in an accent that expressed his joy.

Your niece has pleased you *now*, I hope, Mr. Selby, said my grandmamma.

Pretty well! pretty well! God grant that we meet with no *put-offs!* I hardly longed so much for my own day with my dame Selby there, as I have done, and do, to see my Harriet Lady Grandison—God, God, bless you, my dearest love! and kissed my cheek—You have been very, *very* good in the main—And, but for dame Selby, would have been better, as far as I know.

You don't do me justice, my dear, replied my aunt.

Don't I!—Nor did I ever—taking kindly her hand. It was impossible, my dear Sir Charles Grandison, for such a man as I to do justice to this excellent woman. *You* never, Sir, will be so *froppish* as I have been: it was in my nature: I could not help it: but I was always sorry for it *afterwards*—But if Harriet make *you* no worse a wife than my dame Selby has made *me*, you will not be unhappy—And yet I was led a tedious dance after her, before I knew what she would be at—I had like to have forgot that. But one thing I have to request, proceeded my uncle—Mr. Deane and I have been talking of it—God bless your dear souls, all of you, oblige me—It is, That we may have a joyful day of it; and that all our neighbours and tenants may rejoice with us. I must make the village smoak. No *hugger-mugger* doings—Let private weddings be for *doubtful* happiness—

O my uncle! said I—

And O my niece, too! I *must* have it so. Sir Charles, what say *you?* Are you for chamber-marriages?—I *say*, that such are neither *decent*, nor *godly*. But you would not allow Lady G. to come off so—And in your *own* case—

And for doing as in Lady G.'s. I must hope to

pay my vows at the altar to this excellent lady. What says my Miss Byron?

I, Sir, hope to return mine in the same sacred place (my face, as I felt, in a glow); but yet I shall wish to have it as private as possible.

Why, oy, to be sure—When a woman is to do any-thing she is ashamed of—I think she is right to be private, for *example*-sake. Shall *you* be ashamed, Sir Charles?

Sir Charles has given it under his hand, this very day, said Lucy (interrupting him, as he was going to speak) that he shall glory in receiving my cousin's hand before ten thousand witnesses.

Make but my dearest Miss Byron easy on this head, said Sir Charles (that task, ladies, be yours); and, so the church be the place, I shall be happy in the manner.

The ceremony, said my grandmamma, *cannot* be a private one with us: every-body's eyes are upon us. It would be an affectation in us, that would rather raise, than allay, curiosity.

And I have as good as promised the two pretty Nedhams, said my uncle—and Miss Watson and her cousin are in expectation—

O my uncle!

Dear Harriet, forgive me! These are your companions from childhood! You can treat them but once in your life in this way. They would be glad at heart to return the favour.

I withdrew: Lucy followed me—*You*, Lucy, I see, said I, are for these public doings—But you would not, if it were your own case.

Your case is *my* case, Harriet. I should hardly bear being made a shew of with any other man: but with such a man as yours, if I did not *hold up my head*, I should give leer for stare, to see how envy sat upon the women's faces. *You* may leer at the

men, for the same reason. It will be a wicked day, after all, Harriet; for a general envy will possess the hearts of all beholders.

Lucy, you know, my dear Lady G. is a whimsical girl.

So, my dear, the solemn day is fixed. If you could favour me with your supporting presence—I know, if you come, you will be very good, now I have not, as I hope you will think, been guilty of *much*, no not of *any*, parade—Lucy will write letters for me to Lady D. to my cousin Reeves's, and will undertake all matters of ceremony for her Harriet. May I but have the happiness to know that Lady Clementina—What *can* I wish for Lady Clementina? —But should she be unhappy—that would indeed be an abatement of my felicity!

There is no such thing as thinking of the dear Emily. What a happiness, could I have seen Lady L. here!—But that cannot be. May the day that will in its *anniversary* be the happiest of *my* life, give to *Lord* and *Lady L.* their most earnest wishes!

Sir Charles dispatches Frederick to-morrow to town with letters: he will bring you mine. I would not go to rest till I had finished it.

What have I more to say?—I seem to have a great deal. My head and my heart are full: yet it is time to draw to a conclusion.

Let me, my dearest Lady G. know, if I am to have any hopes of your presence? Will you be so good as to manage with Emily?

My aunt bids me propose to you, that since we are to have all the world of *our* acquaintance, you should bring down your aunt Grandison with you. —We have at both houses a great deal of room.

Sir Charles just now asked my grandmamma, Whether Dr. Curtis would be satisfied with a handsome present, if every one's dear Dr. Bartlett were

to perform the ceremony? My grandmamma answered, That Dr. Curtis was one of my admiring friends. He had for years, even from my girlhood, prided himself with the hopes of joining my hand in marriage, especially if the office were performed in Northamptonshire. She was afraid he would think himself slighted; and he was a very worthy man.

Sir Charles acquiesced. But, greatly as I respect Dr. Curtis, I should have preferred the venerable Dr. Bartlett to any man in the world. A solemn, solemn subject, though a joyful one!

Adieu, adieu, my dear Lady G. Be sure, continue to love me. I will, if possible, deserve your love. Witness

HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER XLV.

LADY G. TO MISS BYRON.

Friday morning, November 10.

Expect a letter of hurry, in answer to one, two, three, four, five, six, I don't know how many, of yours; some filled with tenderness, some with love, some with nicety, sense, and nonsense. I shall reckon with you soon for one of them, in which you take intolerable liberties with me. O Harriet! tremble at my resentment. You are downright scurrilous, my dear.

I imputed extravagance to Emily, in my last. The girl's a good girl. I was too hasty. I will shew you two letters of hers, and one of my brother, which clears up the imputation. I love her more and more. Poor girl! Love peeps out in twenty places of hers: in his, he is the best of men—But that you knew before.

And so the honest man kissed you; kissed your lip! O lud! O lud! how could you bear him afterwards in your sight?—Forgiving creature!—And so you were friends with him before you had time to shew your anger.—Nothing like doing impudent things in a hurry.—Sometimes respectful, sometimes free: why this is the way of all the fellows, Harriet! —And so they go on till the respectfulness is drawn off, and nothing but the lees are left; and after two or three months are over, the once squeamish palate will be glad of *them*.

I like your uncle better than I like either your aunt or you—He likes me.

What a miserable dog [take the word for shortness; I am in haste] is Sir Hargrave!

Your plea against Clementina being *compelled*, or *over*-persuaded (the same thing) I much like. You are a good girl.

Betwixt her excellencies and yours, how must my brother's soul be divided!—I wonder he thinks of either of you.

Ass and two bundles of hay, Harriet. But my brother is a nobler animal. He won't starve. However, I think in my conscience, that he should have you both. There might be a law made, that the case should not be brought into precedent till two such women should be found, and such a man; and all three in the like situation.

Bagenhall, a miserable devil!—Excellent warning-pieces!

Wicked Harriet! You infected me with your horrible inferences from Greville's temper, threatenings, and so forth. The conclusion of this letter left me a wretch!—If these megrims are the effect of love, thank Heaven, I never knew what it was.

Devilish girl, to torment me with your dreams! If you ever tell me of any more of them, except they are of a different sort, woe be to you!

I like your parting scene, and all that. Your *realities*, thank Heaven, are more delightful than your *reveries*. I hope you'll always find them so.

And so you were full of apprehensions on the favour your aunt did me in employing me about your *nuptial equipments*. Long ago 'you gave affectation to the winds.' Good! But the winds would not accept of your present. They puffed it you back again, and your servants never told you it was brought home. I repeat, my dear, that my brother is much more clever, in these scenes of love and courtship, than his mistress. You are a pretty cow, my love: you give good store of milk, but you have a very careless heel. Yet when you *bethink* you, you are very good; but not always the same Harriet. Your nurse in your infancy, *see-sawed* you—*Margery-down*—and you can't put the pretty play out of your practice, though it is out of your memory. I can look back, and sometimes by your frowardness, sometimes by your crowing, know how it was with you eighteen years ago.

My brother's letter to you, after he has mentioned his visits to the two sick baronets, is that of a man who shews you genteelly, and politely, that he is sensible he has a pretty trifler to deal with. I wish you would square your conduct, by what you must imagine a man of his sense would think of you. I should be too proud a minx, in your case, to owe obligation to my man for bearing with me—Spare me, spare me, Harriet! I have hit myself a terrible box on the ear. But we can find faults in others, which we will not allow to be such in ourselves—But here is the difference between your conduct *now*, and what mine *was*. I *knew* I was wrong, and resolved one day to amend. You think yourself right, and, while you so think, will hardly ever amend, till your man ties you down to good behaviour.

Jeronymo's letter! O the next-to divine Clementina! Indeed, Harriet, I think she out-soars you. I adore her. But will she be prevailed upon to marry? —She will!—If she *does*—Then—But, dear soul!—Pressed as she is—Having refused (instead of being refused) the beloved of her heart, she will still be greater than any of her sex, if she *does*; the man proposed, *so* unexceptionable; so tenderly loving her, in the height of her calamity, as well as in her prosperity!—Gratitude to him, as well as duty to her parents; parents so indulgent as they have always been to her; will incline her to marry. May she be happy!—I am pleased with your solicitude for her happiness.

I like your answer to my brother: a good and well-deserved resignation. Let's see how you keep to it.

You do keep to it—*As I expected*—Ah, Harriet! you are quite a girl sometimes; though at others, more than woman! 'Will he not ask leave to come down!' Fine resignation!—'Will he not write, first?' —Yes, yes, *he* will do every thing he ought to do. Look to your own behaviour, child; don't fear but *his* will be all as it should be.

As to your finery, how now, Harriet! Are *you* to direct every thing; yet pretend to ask advice? Be contented that every thing is *done for you* of this sort, and learn to be humble. Surely we that have passed the Rubicon, are not to be directed by you, who never came in sight of the river. But you, maidens, are poor, proud, pragmatical mortals. You profess ignorance; but in *heart* imagine you are at the tip-top of your wisdom.

But here you come with your horrid fears again. Would to the Lord the day were over; and you and my brother *were*—Upon my life—you are a—But I won't call you names.

Lucy thinks you should go to Shirley-manor when my brother comes—Egregious folly! I did not think Lucy could have been so silly.

Concerning our cousin Reeves's wanting to be present at your nuptials—your invitation to me—and what you say of Emily—more anon.

Well, and so my brother has sent you the expected letter. Does it please you, Harriet? The duce is in you, if it don't.

But you are *not* pleased with it, it seems. He is too hasty for you. Where's the boasted-of resignation, Harriet? True *female* resignation!

Tell Lucy, I am obliged to her for her transcriptions. I shall be very proud of her correspondence.

'Your *aunt* thinks he is full hasty.'—Your aunt's a simpleton, as well as you. My service to her.

But is the d—l in the girl again? What would have become of Lady L. and me, had you not sent both letters together that relate to Greville's supposed malignance? I tremble, nevertheless, at the thought of what might have been. But I will not forgive Lucy for advising you to send to us your horribly-painted terrors. What could possess *her* to advise you to do so, and *you*, to follow her advice? I forgive not either of you. In revenge, I will remind you, that they were *good* women, to whom my brother owed all the embarrassments of his past life.

But a caution, Harriet!—Never, never, let foolish dreams claim a moment of your attention—Imminent as seemed the danger, your superstition made it more dreadful to you than otherwise it would have been. You have a mind superior to such foibles: act up to its native dignity, and let not the follies of your nurses, in your infantile state, be carried into your maturer age, to depreciate your womanly

reason—Do you think I don't dream, as well as you?

Well might ye all rejoice in his safety. 'Hang about his neck, for joy!' So you ought, if you thought it would do him honour. Hush, hush, proud girl! don't scold me! I think, were a king your man, he would have been honoured by the charming freedom. 'There can be no reserve to him after this,' you say. Nor ought there, had it not *been* for this: Did you not signify to him, by letter, that you would resign to his generosity? Let me whisper you, Harriet—Sure you proud maiden minxes *think*—But *I* did once—I often wonder in my heart—But men and women are cheats to one another. But we may, in a great measure, thank the poetical tribe for the fascination. I hate them all. Are they not inflamers of the worst passions? With regard to the *epics*, would Alexander, madman as he was, have been so *much* a madman, had it not been for Homer? Of what violences, murders, depredations, have not the epic poets been the occasion, by propagating false honour, false glory, and false religion? Those of the *amorous class* ought in all ages (could their future genius's for tinkling sound and measure have been known) to have been strangled in their cradles. Abusers of talents given them for better purposes (for all this time, I put sacred poesy out of the question); and *avowedly* claiming a right to be *licentious*, and to overleap the bounds of decency, truth, and nature.

What a rant! How came these fellows into my rambling head? O, I remember—My whisper to you led me into all this stuff.

Well, and you at last recollect the trouble you have given my brother about you. Good girl! Had I remembered *that*, I would have spared you my reflections upon the poets and poetasters of all ages,

the *truly* inspired ones excepted: and yet I think the others should have been banished *our* commonwealth, as well as Plato's.

Well, but, to shorten *my* nonsense, now *you* have shortened yours—The day is at last fixed—Joy, joy, joy, to you, my lovely Harriet, and to my brother! —And it must be a public affair!—Why—that's right, since it would be impossible to make it a private one.

My honest man is mad for joy. He fell down on his knees, to beg of me to accept of *your* invitation, and of *his* company. I made a merit of obliging him, though I would have been as humble to *him*, rather than not be with you; and yet, by one saucy line, I imagine you had rather be without me.

Your cousin Reeves's are ready to set out.

God bless you, invite aunt Nell in *form:* she thinks herself neglected. A nephew whom she so dearly loves! Very hard! she says.—And she never was but at one wedding, and has forgot how it was; and may never be at another—Pink and yellow, all is ready provided, go down or not—O but, if you choose not her company, I will tell you how to come off—Give her your word and honour that she shall be a person of prime account at your first christening. Yet she would be glad to be present on both occasions.

But ah, the poor Emily!—She has also been on her knees to me, to take *her* down with me—What shall I do?—Dear soul, she embarrasses me! I have put her upon writing to her guardian, for his leave. I believe she has written. If she knew her own case, I think she would not desire it.

Poor Lady L.!—She is robbed, she says, of one of the greatest pleasures of her life. Ah, Charlotte! said she to me, wringing my hand, these husbands owe us a great deal. This is an humbling circum-

stance. Were not *my* lord and *yours* the best of husbands—

The best of husbands! Wretches! said I. You may forgive yours, Caroline—You are a good creature; but not I mine. And something else I said, that made her laugh in the midst of her *lacrimals.* But she begs and prays of me, not to go down to you, unless all should be over with her. I can do her no good; and only increase my own apprehensions, if I am with her. A blessed way two poor souls of sisters of us are in.—Sorry fellows!

And yet, Harriet, with such prospects as these before them, some girls leap windows, swim rivers, climb walls—Duce take their folly: their choice is their punishment. Who can pity such rash souls as those? Thanks be praised, you, Harriet, are going on to keep in countenance the two anxious sisters.—

> Who, having shot the gulph, delight to see
> Succeeding souls plunge in with like uncertainty;

Says a good man, on a still *more* serious occasion.

* *

Good news! joyful news!—I shall, I shall, go down to you. Nothing to hinder me! Lord L. proud as a peacock, is this moment come for me: I am hurrying away with him. A fine boy!—Sister safe!—Harriet, Lucy, Nancy, for your own future encouragement! Huzza, girls!—I am gone.

LETTER XLVI.

MISS BYRON TO LADY G.

Thursday, November 9.

My aunt is so much afraid that every-thing will not be ready, that she puts me upon writing to you, to hasten what remains. I am more than half a fool—But that I always was. My spirits sink at the thoughts of so public a day. The mind, my grandmamma says, *can* but be full; and it would have been filled by the circumstance, had not the publicness of the day given me something more of apprehension.

I am afraid, sometimes, that I shall not support my spirits; that I shall be ill—Then I think something will happen—Can it be, that I shall be the wife of Sir Charles Grandison? I can hardly believe it.

Sir Charles is tenderly concerned for me. It would be impossible, he says, that the day could be private, unless I were to go to London; and the very proposing of *that* would put my uncle out of all patience; who prides himself in the thought of having his Harriet married from his own house: nor could I expect my grandmamma's presence. He does all he can to assure my heart, and divert me: a thousand agreeable lively things he says: so tender, so considerate, in his joy!—surely I shall be too happy. But will you come? Can you? And if you do, will you be good? Will you make my case your own?

My uncle, at times, is prodigiously headstrong. Every hour he does or says something wrong; yet we dare not chide him. Thursday next will be one of the greatest days of his life, he says; and it shall

be all his own. He either sings, hums, or whistles, in every motion. He resolves to get his best dancing legs in readiness. He started up from table after dinner this day, and caught hold of Lucy's hand, and whisked her round the room. *Dear toad*, he called her; a common address of his to Lucy (I say, because she has a jewel in her head); and flourishing about with her in a very humorous manner, put her quite out, on purpose to laugh at her; for she would have been in, if he would have let her, for the humour-sake. He was a fine dancer in his youth.

Miss Orme breakfasted with us this morning. She, no doubt, threw herself in our way on purpose to hear the news of the appointed day confirmed. My uncle officiously told her, it would be one day next week. She named the very day, and turned pale, on his owning she was not mistaken. But, recollecting herself; Now then, said she, is the time to remind my brother of a promise he made before he went abroad, to carry me to London, on a visit to some relations there. I will prevail on him, if I can, to set out on Monday or Tuesday.

God bless you! my dear Miss Byron, said she, at parting; may your bustle be happily over! I shall pity you. You will pay for being so universally admired. But your penance will be but for two days; the *very* day, and that of your *appearance;* and in both your man will bear you out: his merit, his person, his address.—Happy Miss Byron! The universal approbation is yours. But I must have you contrive somehow, that my brother may see him before he is yours: his heart will be the easier afterwards.

—Sent for down by my grandmamma.—Dear Lucy, make up the letter for me. I know you will be glad of the opportunity.

CONTINUED BY LUCY.] 'Will Lady G. admit me, in this abrupt manner, into her *imperial presence*? I know she will, on this joyful occasion, accept of any intelligence. The poor Harriet! My uncle Selby would invite all the country, if they came in his way. Four of my cousin's old playfellows have already been to claim his promise. He wished, he said, he had room for all the world; it should be welcome.

'He will have the great barn, as it is called, cleared out; a tight large building, which is to be illuminated at night with a profusion of lights; and there all his tenants, and those of Shirley-manor, are to be treated, with their wives, and such of their sons and daughters as are more than twelve years old. The treat is to be a cold one. Hawkins, his steward, who is well respected by them all, is to have the direction of it. My uncle's October is not to be spared. It will cost two days, at least, to roast, boil, and bake, for them. The carpenters are already sent for. Half a dozen bonfires are to be lighted up, round the great barn; and the stacks of wood are not to be spared, to turn winter into summer, as my uncle expresses himself.

'Neither the poor nor the populace are to be admitted, that the confusion from a promiscuous multitude may be avoided. But notice will be given, that two houses in the neighbouring village, held by tenants of the family, and one near Shirley-manor, will be opened at twelve on Thursday, and be kept open for the rest of the day, till ten at night, for the sake of all who choose to go thither. The churchwardens are preparing a list of the poor people; who, on Friday morning, *were* to receive *five* shillings apiece, which Sir Charles has desired to make *ten*; on condition that they shall not be troublesome on the day.

'Poor Sir Hargrave, to whom all this joyful bustle is primarily owing!—I tell Harriet, that she has not, with all her punctilio, been half punctilious enough. She should have had him, after all, on the motive of Prince Prettiman in the *Rehearsal.*

'Dear madam, can your ladyship allow of this idle rattle? But I have not time to make up for it by a ceremonious conclusion; though I am, with the truest respect, Lady G.'s

Most obedient humble servant,

LUCY SELBY.

LETTER XLVII.

LADY G. TO MISS BYRON.

Saturday, November 11.

I SIT down to write a *few* lines, if, writing to you, I *can* write a few, by the special messenger that carries all the remaining apparatus which was committed to my care. We women are sad creatures for delaying things to the last moment. We hurry the men: we hurry our workwomen, milliners, mantua-makers, friends, allies, confederates, and ourselves. When once we have given the day, night *and* day, we neither take rest, nor give it: when, if we had the *rare* felicity of knowing our minds sooner, all might go on fair and softly. But then the *gentle* passion, I doubt, would glide into insipidity. Well, and I have heard my brother say, 'That things in general are best as they are.' Why I believe so; for all these honest souls, as mantua-makers, attire-women, work-women, *enjoy* a hurry that is occasioned by a wedding, and are half as well pleased with it, as if it were their own. They simper, smirk,

gossip over bridal finery; spread this on their arms or shoulders; admire that—Look you here—Look ye there! And is not this?—Is not that?—And, did you ever!—No, never, in my *born* days!—And is the bride, do you say, such a lovely creature?—And is the bridegroom as handsome a man, as she a woman?—O lud! O dear!—Would to Heaven Northamptonshire were nearer, that one might see how charming, how graceful, how becoming!—and so-forth.

And why should not we women, after all, contrive to make hurry-skurries, [you see how I correct myself as I go along] and make the world think our affairs a great part of the business of it, and that nothing can be done without us? Since, after a few months are over, new novelties take place, and we get into corners, sigh, groan, look silly and meager, and at last are thrown into *straw*, as it is called; poor Caroline's case; who repines, that she can't be present on this new bustle in the family. But I am to acquaint her with every thing, by pen and ink.—Look to your behaviour, Harriet, on the great occasion.

But a word about Caroline.—Were it not for her being deprived of this pleasure, the good creature would be very happy. Lord L. and she are as fond as apes. She has quite forgot all her sufferings for him. He thanks her for his boy. She follows with her eye the little stranger, and is delighted with all that is done *with* him, *to* him, *for* him.—Is pleased with every-body, even with the very servants, who crowd in, by permission to see his little lordship, and already claim an interest in him. Upon my word, she makes a very pretty fond mother. And aunt Nell, who, by the way, was at the crying-out, and was then *so* frighted! *so* thankful to God! and *so* happy in her own situation! [No, not for the world,

would she be other than she was!] now grudges the nurses half their cares.

What good creatures are we women!

Well, but I don't know what to do about Emily. The first vice of the first woman was curiosity, and it runs through all her daughters. She has written to her guardian, and nothing but an absolute prohibition will hinder her from making one in your train. Did the dear girl know the state of her own heart, she would choose to be a thousand miles off, rather than go. I have set her woman and mine to discourage her. I have reasoned with her myself; but there is no such thing as giving her one's *true* reasons; nor *would* I, willingly: because she herself, having not found out her love to be love, I hope the fire may be smothered in her own heart, by the aid of time and discretion, before discovery; whereas, if the doors of it were to be opened, and the air let in, it might set the whole tenement in a blaze. Her guardian's denial or assent will come, perhaps, in time; yet *hardly*, neither; for we shall set out on Monday. Aunt Nell is so pleased with her nursery of the *little peer*, as she primly calls him, that you are rid of even her *wishes* to be with you. Being *sure of this*, I told her, that your aunt had hinted to me her design to invite her in form; but that I had let you know, that Lady L. would not be able to live without her company, all the world, and the world's wife, attentive and engrossed by your affair. She, good creature! was pleased—So as she could but be thought of importance, by somebody, I knew she would be happy. I told her that *you* invited nobody, but left all to your friends—Ay, poor dear soul, said she; she has enough to think of, well as she loves your brother—And sighed for *you*—Worthy ancient! The sigh a little deeper, perhaps, for some of her own recollections.

Mr. and Mrs. Reeves would not stay for us. What will you do with us all?—Crowd you, I fear. But dispose of *us*, at Shirley-manor, or Selby-house, as you please. Yours, and aunt Selby's, and grandmamma Shirley's concern for us, is all we are solicitous about. But servants rooms, nay cocklofts, haylofts, will do. We like to be put to our shifts, now-and-then—Something to talk of—

But I can tell you, if you don't know it already, Lord W. and his lady are resolved to do you honour on this occasion; but they will be but little trouble to you. My lord's steward has a half-brother, a gentleman-farmer, in your neighbourhood—Sheldon—They will be there: but perhaps you know of this a better way. They will make a splendid part of your train. Gratitude is their inducement.

Lord L. has just now told me, that my sister, in tenderness to him, and in honour to you, has besought *him* to be present, O Harriet! what will you do with yourself? Aunt Nell and I have the heart-burn for you. But Lord L. *must* be welcome: he is one of those who so faithfully kept your secret.

So, in *our* equipages, will be Lord L. my honest man, Emily, and your Charlotte: Lord L.'s equipages will be at the service of any of your guests; as will our spare one—I wish Beauchamp could permit himself to be present (I hope he will) on the nuptials of the friend so dear to him, with a lady he so greatly admires.

My woman and Emily's will be all our female attendants: one nook will serve them both.

My poor man will be mad, before the day comes. He *does* love you, Harriet. My brother, he says, will be the happiest man in the world—*himself excepted*—A hypocrite! He just popt this in, to save himself—Why dost make this exception, friend? said I—Thou knowest it to be a mere compliment—

Indeed, indeed (*two* indeeds, which implied, that *one* might have been doubted) I am *now* [a sarcasm in his word *now*] as happy as mortal man can be—Ah, flatterer! and shook my head—A recognition of my sovereignty, however, in his being afraid to speak his conscience. A little of the old leaven, Harriet!—I can't help it. It is got out of my heart, half out out of my head; but, when I take the pen, it will tingle now-and-then, at my finger's end.

Adieu, my love!—God bless you!—I can enter into your joy. A love so pure, and so fervent. The man Sir Charles Grandison.—And into your *pain*, also, in view of a solemnity so near, and to you so awful. With all my roguery, I sympathize with you. I have not either a wicked or unfeeling heart. Such as yours, however, are the true spirits; such as mine are only bully and flash.

Lucy, you are a good girl. I like the whim of your concluding for Harriet. I also like your tenants dining-room, and other managements, as the affair must unavoidably be a public one.

Neither of you say a word of good Mr. Deane. I hope he is with you. He cannot be a cypher wherever he comes, except on the right-side of the figure, to increase its consequence. Don't be afraid of your uncle; I, I, I, will manage him, never fear.

There are other passages, Harriet, in your last letter, which I ought to have answered to—But forgive me, my dear; I had laid it by (though pleased with it in the main); and, having answered the most material part, by dispatching your things, forgot it as much as if I had not received it, till the moment I came to conclude. Once more, adieu, my dearest Harriet.

CH. G.

LETTER XLVIII.

MISS JERVOIS TO SIR CHARLES GRANDISON.

Friday, November 10.

No sooner, dear and honoured Sir, is one boon granted me, but I have another to beg; yet I blush as I write, for my troublesomeness. I told you, Sir, I had furnished myself with new clothes, on a very joyful occasion—Indeed it is on a *very* joyful occasion. You would lay me under a new obligation to your goodness, if you would be pleased to allow me to attend Lady G. in her journey down. I shall know, by this fresh favour, that you have *quite* forgiven your dutiful ward. I presume not to add another word—But I dare say, dear Miss Byron, that now is, will not be against it, if you are not.—God bless you, my honoured good Sir—But God, I hope, I am sure, *will* bless you; and so shall I, as surely I ought, whether you grant this favour, or not, to

Your ever-obliged, and grateful

EMILY JERVOIS.

LETTER XLIX.

SIR CHARLES GRANDISON TO MISS JERVOIS.

Sunday, November 12.

It would give me great pain to deny to my good Miss Jervois the grant of any request she shall think fit to make to me. You shall know, you say, by the grant of this favour, that I have quite forgiven my ward—Was such a test wanted, my dear?

assure you, that what you have lately done for your mother, though I was not consulted in it, has heightened my opinion of the worthiness of your heart.

As to your request, I have pleasure in leaving every-thing relating to the happy event to my beloved Miss Byron and her friends. I will entreat her to underwrite her mind on this subject. She grieves that the solemnity cannot be private; which, beloved as she is in this neighbourhood, would be vain to attempt.

If her aunt has no objection from want of room, there cannot, my dear Emily, be any from

Your affectionate and true friend,

CH. GRANDISON.

UNDERWRITTEN.

My dearest Miss Jervois will excuse me, that I gave her not a formal invitation, when I intimated my wishes for Lady G.'s presence on the approaching solemn occasion, though at so many miles distance. It is a *very* solemn one. One's heart, my dear, cannot be so much disengaged, as to attend to invitations for the *very* day, as it might on its *anniversary*. We shall have too great a number of friends. O my dear! can you bear to make one in so large a company? I shall not be able to attend to any of my friends on the day: no, not to you, my love. Can you bear with my inattention to every-body, to every subject, but one? Can you desire to see your Harriet (joyful as the occasion is, and the chosen wish of her heart) look and behave like a foolish creature? If you can, and Lady G. will take charge of my lovely young friend, all mine will rejoice in being able to contribute to your pleasure, as well as

Your ever-affectionate

HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER L.

LADY G. TO LADY L.

Selby-house, Tuesday, November 14.

WELL, my sister, my friend, my dear Lady L. how do you? *As well as can be expected*, I hope: the answer of a thousand years old, to every enquirer, careful or ceremonious. And how does my dear little boy? As well *as can be expected*, too—I am glad of it.

Here we are!—Every body well, and happy.

I was afraid my brother would have looked more *polite* upon us than *familiar*; as he invited us not: but, no!—He was all himself, as Harriet says. He met us at our coach-door. He handed out his ward. She could not speak. Tears were in her eyes. I could have beat her with my fan. He kissed her cheek. My dear child, I thank you most sincerely for your goodness to your mother.

I was afraid that her joy would then have been too much for her. She expanded, she collected, her plumes. Her spread arms (soon, however, closed) shewed me, that she with difficulty restrained herself from falling at his feet. He turned from her to me. My best Charlotte, how do you? The journey, I hope, has not incommoded you. He led me out, and, taking each of the honest men by the hand, My dear lords, you do me honour. He then congratulated Lord L. on the present you had made him, and the family.

At the inner gate met us our sweet Harriet, with joy upon one brow, half the cares of this mortal life on the other. She led us into the cedar-parlour, and threw her arms about my neck—My dearest Lady G. how much does your presence rejoice me!

—I hope (and looked at me) your journey—Be quiet, Harriet. You must not think so much of *these* matters, my love. She was a little abashed. Don't be afraid of me; I will be very good. Then I will be very thankful, replied she.

My lovely Emily, turning to her: How does my sweet friend? Welcome, once more, to Selby-house.

The girl's heart was full. She (thanking her only by a deep courtesy) abruptly withdrew to the window; and, trying for a third hem, in hopes to stifle her emotion, it broke into a half-sob, and tears followed.

Harriet and I looked; *she* compassionately, *I* vexedly, I believe; and both shook our heads at each other.

Take no notice, said I, seeing Harriet move towards the window to her—It will go off of itself. Her joy to see her Harriet, that's all.

But I *must* take notice (for she found that Emily heard me) My dear Emily, my lovely young friend—why—

I will tell you, madam, interrupted she, and threw her arms about Harriet's neck, as Harriet (sitting in the window) clasped hers about her waist; and I will tell you truth, and nothing but the truth—You wrote so cool to me, about my coming—And yet I to come! But I could not help it—And I thought you now looked a little severely upon me—But love, and, I will say, duty to you, my dearest Miss Byron, AND NOTHING ELSE, made me so earnest to come. Say you forgive me.

Forgive you, my dearest Emily!—I had only your sake, my dear, in view. If I wrote with less warmth than you expected, forgive *me*. Consider my situation, my love. You are, and ever will be, welcome to me. Your griefs, your joys, are mine—Give me which you please.

The girl burst into fresh tears—I, I, I am now as unable, sobbed she, to bear your goodness, as before I was your displeasure—But hide, hide me! Here comes my guardian!—What now, when he sees me thus, will become of me?

She heard his voice at the door, leading in the two lords; and they followed by the rest of the family.

Sir Charles went to the two young ladies. Harriet kept her seat, her arms folded about Emily.

Sweet emotion! said he: My Emily in tears of joy!—What a charming picture!—O my Miss Byron, how does your tenderness to this amiable child oblige me! I sever you not; clasping his arms about them both.

I have afflicted my dear Emily, Sir, without intending it. I wrote coldly, my precious young friend thinks; and her love for me makes her sweetly-sensible of my supposed ingratitude. But believe me, my dear, I love you with a true sisterly tenderness.

I took the dear girl aside, and gently expostulated with her, upon the childishness of her behaviour, and the uneasiness she would give to Miss Byron, as well as to herself, by repetitions of the like weakness of mind.

She promised fair; but Lady L. I wish there were more of the child, and less of the woman, in this affair. Poor thing! she was very thankful for my advice; and expressed how wrong she was, *because* it might discourage her guardian and Miss Byron, that *now was*, from letting her live with them? But for my life, said she, whatever was the matter with me, I could not help my foolishness.

Miss Nancy Selby took Emily up with her; and uncle Selby and I had a little lively hit at each other, in the old stile. We drew my brother in. I had not

tried his strength a good while: but, as Harriet said in one of the sauciest letters she ever wrote, I soon found he was the wrong person to meddle with. Yet he is such a charming raillier, that I wonder he can resist his talent. *No* wonder, Harriet would say; because he has talents so superior to that which, she says, runs away with his poor sister.

Emily came down to us very composed, and behaved prettily enough: but had my brother as much mannish vanity as some of the sorry fellows have, who have no pretence for it, he would discern the poor Emily's foible to have some little susceptibility in it. I am glad he does not, for it would grieve him.

Mr. Reeves, his wife, and Mr. Deane, were abroad when we arrived. They came in to tea. Our mutual congratulations on the expected happy event cheered our own hearts, and would have delighted yours. Charming, charming, is the behaviour of my brother to his bride-elect. You can have no notion of it; because at Colnebrook we always saw him acting under a restraint; owing, as since we have found, to honour, conscience, and a prior love.

He diverts and turns the course of subjects that he thinks would be affecting to her; yet in such a manner, as it is hardly perceivable to be his intention to do so: for he makes something of the begun ones contribute to the new ones; so that, before uncle Selby is aware of it, he finds himself in one that he had not in his head when he sat out.—And then he comes with his 'What a pize was I going to say? But this is not what I had in my head.' And then, as my brother knows he misses his scent, only because it has not afforded the merry mortal something to laugh at; he furnishes him with some lively and innocent occasion which produces that effect, and Mr. Selby is satisfied. Mrs. Selby and Lucy see how my brother manages him, and are pleased with it;

for it is so delicately done, that something arises from it that keeps the honest man in credit with himself and with every body else, for his good humour, good heart, and those other qualities which make him in his worst subjects tolerable, and in his best valuable.

Venerable Mrs. Shirley is to be here all to-morrow and next day. Mr. Deane has chosen Shirley-manor for his abode, for the time he stays; so has James Selby, in order to make more room at Selby-house for us women. There too Mr. and Mrs. Reeves take up, of choice, their lodgings, though here all day.

Poor Harriet! She told *me* once, that fear makes cowards loving. She is so fond of me and Lucy, and her aunt, at times, it would be a sin not to pity her. Yet Lucy once tossed up her head, upon my saying so—*Pity her!* why, yes, I think I do, now you have put it in my head: but I don't know whether she is not more to be *envied*. Lucy is a polite girl. She loves her Harriet. But she knew I should be pleased with the compliment to my brother.

Harriet has just now looked in upon me—Writing, Lady G. And of me?—To Lady L. I suppose?

She clasped her arms about me: Ah, madam! Thursday! Thursday!

What of Thursday?

Is the day after to-morrow!

Every child can tell that, Harriet.

Ah but I, with such happiness before me, am sillier *than* a child!

Well, but I can tell you something, Harriet.

What is that?

That the next day to Thursday, is Friday—The next to that is Saturday—The next—

Pish! I'll stay no longer with you; giving me a gentle tap—I would not have answered you so.

Away she tript, desiring her affectionate compliments to dear Lady L.

Let me see! Have I any more to write? I think not. But a call to supper makes me leave my paper unsubscribed.

* *

Emily behaved very prettily at supper; but it would have been as well, if she had not thought so herself: for she boasted of her behaviour afterwards to me. That made it look like an *extraordinary* in her own account.

Mr. Selby sung us a song, with a good fox-hunter air. There is something very agreeable in his facetiousness; but it would become nobody else. I think you and I agreed at Dunstable, that he is a fine, jolly, hearty, handsome-*ish* man—He looks shrewd, arch, open, a true country gentleman aspect; what he says is *so so*—What he means is better.—He is very fond of your lord—But I think rather fonder of *mine*.—A criterion, Lady L.!

As for Lord G. he is in the situation of Harriet's Singleton—He is prepared to laugh the moment Mr. Selby opens his mouth; especially when he twists his neck about, turns a glass upside down, and looks under his bent brows, at the company round, yet the table always in his eye: for then we know, that something is collected, and ready to burst forth.

Well, good night! good night! good night!—Has my godson elect done crying yet? What a duce has *he* to cry at? Unswaddled, unpinioned, unswathed, legs and arms at full liberty: but they say crying does good to the brats—opens their pipes—and so forth—But tell him, that if he does not learn to laugh, as well as cry, he shall not be related to

CHARLOTTE G.

LETTER LI.

LADY G. IN CONTINUATION.

Wednesday, November 15.

Wednesday is come, and, as Harriet says, to-morrow is Thursday. Ah, Harriet! rich as content! poor as patience!

I have been talking to her: half-comforting her, half-laughing at her. She says, I am but half good.

All the world is come.—Lord W. and his ever-agreeable lady. Beauchamp, as I am alive, with them! I wish I could see this rogue Emily in love with him. He is certainly in love with her.

'I know it—I know it!—Do you go down, about your business.'

Only Lord G. come to tell me what I knew before.

Harrriet is gone down to be complimented. She has hardly spirits to compliment.

'Well, well, I'll only tell Lady L. who is come. Does not the poor soul keep her bed? And are we not to be as complaisant to our ill friends, as our well?—I am coming, child.'

Emily, with her pretty impertinence. Neither Lord G. nor Emily, can be any thing, when strangers come, and I stand not by them to shew their significance.

Duce! a third messenger—O! Mrs. Selby herself. I'll tell you more by-and-by, Lady L. 'Your servant, Mrs. Selby. I attend you.'

* *

The two Miss Nedhams, Miss Watson, Miss Barclay, the two Miss Holles's, Mr. Deane,—'So, so, so, Harriet, said I, what is the meaning of this?' —My uncle's doings! I have no spirits. Sir Charles

should not have been so passive: he, and nobody else, could have prevailed upon my uncle. My aunt has held him in, till her arms ached. O the dear restiff man! She has now let go; and you see how he prances over the whole meadow, the reins upon his neck.

Dear girl! said I, I am glad you are so fanciful.

I would fain be lively, if I could, said she. Never any creature had more reason, Lady G.—My heart is all gratitude, and, I will say, love.

Good girl! hold up your head, my dear, and all will be as it should be.

Sir Charles staid to attend hither the most venerable of women. Mr. and Mrs. Reeves are to come with them.

You must, as you expect me to be minute, be content with bits and scraps, written by snatches of time. I pity you for your still-life, my dear Lady L. and think your request, that I will *so* write, as to make you suppose yourself on the spot, a reasonable one.

Here is come the man of men!

* *

With what respect (all his respect has love in it) did he attend Mrs. Shirley to her seat! And then hastening to Lord and Lady W. he saluted them both, and acknowledged the honour done him by their presence; an honour, he said, that he could not have expected, nor therefore had the thought, the distance so great, of asking it.

He then paid his compliments, in the most affectionate manner, to his amiable friend Beauchamp; who, on his thanking him for his uninvited presence, said, he could not deny himself being present at a solemnity that was to complete the happiness of the best of men, and best of friends.

Sir Charles addressed himself to the young ladies

who were most strangers to him; apologizing to them, as they were engaged with Mr. Selby, Mr. Deane, and Lord G. that he did not at first. He sat a few minutes with them: what he said, I heard not; but they smiled, blushed, and looked delighted upon each other. Every body followed him in his motions, with their eye. So much presence of mind never met with so much modesty of behaviour, and so charming a vivacity.

The young ladies came only *intendedly* to breakfast; and that at Mr. Selby's odd invitation. They had the good sense to apologize for their coming this day, as they were to make part of the cavalcade, as I may call it, to-morrow. But the odd soul had met them at a neighbouring lady's, where he made a gossiping visit, and would make them come with him.

I observed, that nobody cared to find fault with him; so I began to rate him! and a very whimsical dialogue passed between us at one end of the room.

I made the honest man ashamed of himself; and every body in our circle was pleased with us. This misled me to go on; and so, by attending to his nonsense, and pursuing my own, I lost the opportunity of hearing a conversation, which, I dare say, would have been worth repeating to you by pen and ink. Harriet shall write, and give it you.

Mr. Orme and his sister, we are told, set out yesterday for London. Mrs. Selby and Harriet are yet afraid of Greville.

The gentlemen and some of the ladies, myself (but not Harriet) among them, have been to look at the preparations made in the lesser park, for the reception of the tenants. Mr. Selby prided himself not a little on his contrivances there. When we returned, we found Harriet at one end of the great parlour, sitting with Emily; her grandmother, Mrs. Selby,

Lucy, in conversation at the other; the good girl's hand in hers, Emily blushing, looking down, but delighted, as it seemed: Harriet, with sweetness, love, and compassion, intermingled in her aspect, talking to her, and bending over her, her fine neck. I thought I never saw her look so lovely. Elder sister like, and younger, one instructing in love, the other listening with pleasure.

They took every body's attention, as the room filled with the company, who all crowded about Mrs. Shirley, affecting not to heed the two friends. What would I give, said Lady W. to Sir Charles and her lord, for a picture of those two young ladies [Emily just then kissed the hand of her lovely friend with emotion, and Harriet raised Emily's to her lips] if love, dignity, and such expression, could be drawn in the face of one lady; and that reverence, gratitude, and modest attention, in the other? I congratulate you, Sir Charles, with all my heart. I have observed with rapture, from every look, every word, and from the whole behaviour of Miss Byron, that your goodness to hundreds will be *greatly* recompensed. O my good Lord W. turning to him, Miss Byron will pay all our debts.

Every attitude, every look, of Miss Byron's, said my lord, would furnish out a fine picture. Where-ever she is, I cannot keep my eye from following her.

My brother bowed, delighted.

How pleased was Mrs. Shirley, Mrs. Selby—Every-body! But what a different man is Lord W. to what he once was! lifted up from low keeping, to a wife, who, by her behaviour, good sense, politeness, gives him consequence. Once I thought him one of the lowest of men. I denied him, in my heart, a relation to my mother, and thought him a savage.

The two young ladies, finding themselves observed, stood up, in a parting posture; but Emily seeming eager to detain her dear friend's attention, Harriet took a hand of Emily's in each of hers.

I had sidled that way—Yes, my dear, said the lovely Harriet, a friendship unalterable, as you say, by time or fate. Dearest Emily, command me ever.

Emily looked about her—O madam, I want to *kneel* to you. I will ever, ever—My good Lady G. said Harriet, approaching me, one of Emily's hands in hers, we have promised a friendship that is to continue to the end of our lives. We are to tell each the other all her faults. How causelesly has my Emily been accusing herself!—The most ingenuous of human hearts is hers.

She left Emily's hand in mine, and bent towards Mrs. Shirley, and the whole circle of friends surrounding her chair.

O my dear Lady G.! said Emily, as we followed the meek-eyed goddess of wisdom [such her air, her manner, her amiableness, seemed in my thought, at that time, to make her], never, never, was such graciousness! I cannot bear her goodness. What a happy creature shall I be, if I follow her example, and observe her precepts!—You cannot, my dear, said I, have a better guide: but, love, you must not be capricious, as you were at first coming. She professed she would not. I have been excusing myself to her, madam, said the dear girl, and am forgiven.

My brother met the lovely creature. He took her hand, and, leading her towards her grandmother, We have been attentive, my dearest life, to you and Emily. You love *her*: she adores *you*. My Beauchamp, you know not the hundredth part of the excellencies of this admirable woman.

You were born for each other. God preserve you both, for an example to a world that wants it.

Harriet courtesied to Beauchamp. Her face was overspread with a fine crimson; but she attempted not to speak. She squeezed herself, as it were, between the chairs of her grandmamma and aunt; then turned about, and looked *so* charmingly! Miss Jervois, Sir, said she, to my brother, has the best of hearts. She *deserves* your kind care. How happy is she, in such protection!

And how much happier will she be in yours, madam! replied he. Of what a care, my Emily, turning to her, has this admirable lady already relieved my heart! The care the greater, as you deserve it all. In every thing take her direction: it will be the direction of love and prudence. What an amiable companion will you make her! and how happy will your love of each other make me!

Emily got behind me, as it were. Speak for me to my guardian; promise for me, madam—You never, never, shall break your word through my fault.

Beauchamp was affected. Graciousness, said he, looking at Harriet, and goodness, looking at Emily, how are they here united! What a happy man will he be, who can entitle himself to a lady formed upon such an example!

A sun-beam from my brother's eye seemed to play upon his face, and dazzle his eyes. The fine youth withdrew behind Lady W.'s chair. Mr. Selby, who had been so good as to give us his silent attention, then spoke, with a twang through his nose. Adad, adad, said he, I don't know what to make of myself—But go on, go on; I love to hear you.

Your good lord, my dear, enjoyed the pleasure we all had: mine tossed up his head, and seemed to snuff the wind: and yet, my dear Lady L. there was nothing so very extraordinary said; but the *manner* was the thing, which shewed a meaning, that left language behind it.

My brother is absolutely passive as to the œconomy of the approaching solemnity. Mrs. Shirley, Mrs. Selby, Lady W. your Charlotte, and Lucy, are the council appointed; but uncle Selby will put in, to marshal this happy proceeding. *What a pize,* he says, is not Harriet *his* daughter? Will it not be his day?

Mrs. Selby tries to smile off his oddity; but now-and-then we see her good-naturedly redden at it, as if for his sake. Lucy looks at her uncle as if she could hardly excuse his particularities; but Mrs. Shirley has always something to say for him. She enters into his character: she knows the honesty, as well as generosity, of his heart: that it all proceeds from joy and love; and always allows for him —as I would have my friends allow for me: and, to say truth, I, for my own part, like him the better for wanting allowances; because his case, in that respect, is mine. Ah, my dear! it is the thoughtful, half-asleep, half-awake, blinking cat, that catches the mouse. Such as your Charlotte, with their kittenish tricks, do but fright away the prey; and, if they could catch it, had rather play with it than kill it.

Harriet is with her virgins: her dress is left to her own choice. I stept in just now—She met me at her dressing-room door, and looked *so* lovely! *so* silly! and *so* full of unmeaning meaningness [Do you understand me, Lady L.?] She sighed—What would my Harriet say to me? said I, taking her hand—I don't know; again sighed—But love me, Lady G.

Can I help it? said I; and, putting my arms about her, kissed her cheek.

Uncle Selby has provided seven gentlemen of the neighbourhood, to match the number of the ladies; for there will be sixteen of us: Mr. *Godfrey*, Mr. *Steele*, Mr. *Falconbridge*, three agreeable young men;

sons of gentlemen in the neighbourhood, Mr. Selby's chosen friends and companions in his field sports; his cousin *Holles*, brother to the Miss Holles's, an admirer of Miss Nedham; young Mr. *Roberts*, an admirer of Miss Barclay; Mr. *Allestree*, a nephew of Sir John, a young man of fine qualities, engaged to Miss Dolly Nedham; and Lord *Reresby* of Ireland (related to Mr. Selby's favourite Sir Thomas Falconbridge); a young nobleman of shining parts, great modesty, good-nature, and, what is worth them all, Mrs. Shirley says, a man of virtue.

Lord W. was very desirous of giving so rich a jewel as Harriet to his nephew, in return, as he said, for *as* rich a jewel which he had presented to him; but Mr. Selby would not admit of that. I told him, on his appeal to me, that he was right, once in his life.

Mr. Selby talks much of the music he has provided for to-morrow. He speaks of it as a *band*, I assure you.

* *

We have had a most agreeable evening. My brother was the soul of the company. His address to his Harriet was respectfully-affectionate, yet, for her sake, not very peculiar. Every body, in turn, had his kindest notice, and was very happy in it. To-morrow's solemnity was often hinted at by Mr. Selby, and even by my flippant lord—But Sir Charles always insensibly led to more general subjects; and this supported the spirits of the too-thoughtful Harriet, and she behaved, on the whole, very prettily. His joy visibly was joy; but it seemed to be of so familiar and easy a nature, as if it would last.

He once occasionally told the happy commencement of his acquaintance with Miss Byron; on purpose, I saw, to remind her, that he ought not to be thought of as a stranger to her, and to engage her

in an easy familiarity. But there was a delicacy observed by him in this remembrance. He began not from the time that he rescued her from Sir Hargrave; but from the first visit she made me in St. James's Square; though she, with great gratitude, carried it back to its real date.

Mrs. Shirley retired soon, as is her custom, her Harriet attending her. The old lady is lame, and infirm; but, as she sits, is a very fine woman; and every-body sees that she was once a beauty. I thought I never saw beauty in full bloom so beautiful as when it supported beauty in ruins, on the old lady's retiring, with a face *so* happy, leaning one arm on her lovely grandchild, a neat crutch-stick in the other, lightening her weight to the delicately-formed supporter of her old age. It was so striking a picture, that every soul, all standing up, from reverence, on her retreating, observed it; nor took off their eyes till the door shut out the graceful figures.

The old lady's lameness is owing, it seems, to a strained sinew, got in leading up a dance, not many years ago, proposed by herself, in order to crown the reconciliation which she had brought about, between a couple that had, till then, been unhappy; and which her good-nature and joy made her not sensible of till she sat down. Pity that any thing should have hurt so benign, so cheerful, so benevolent a woman! Why did not Harriet tell us this circumstance? It would have heightened our value for her: and the more, if she had told us, as is the truth, that she never considers it as a hurt (so honourably come by) but when she thinks she is troublesome to those about her.

Harriet returned to company more cheerful than when she left it, enriched with her grandmother's blessings, and prayers for her and my brother (as

she whispered me) and in having been allowed to support the tottering parent.

Harriet, said I, aloud, you were a very naughty girl to accuse me, as once you did, of reflecting upon age. You never, in my eyes, looked more lovely than you did half an hour ago, supporting the best of old ladies.

We are all of your ladyship's mind, said Lady W. A new grace, believe me, Miss Byron, shone out in every graceful feature.

Your kind notice, ladies, bowing, does me honour; but more to your own hearts.

Most gracefully does the dear girl receive and return a compliment; but this, Lady L. I need not now say to you: we have both admired her on these occasions. How happy will she make a man, who can be so *sensible* of his happiness! And how happy will *he* make *her! He*, who has the most grateful and enlarged of human hearts!

Soon after tea [I tell you things out of course, Lady L. as they come into my head] we most of us withdrew, to hear read the marriage articles: when they were ready to sign, Harriet was sent for in. She would not come in before. She begged, she prayed she might not. The first line of each clause, and the last, for form sake, were run over, by Mr. Deane, as fast as he could read. How the dear creature trembled when she came in, and all the time of the shortened reading! But when the pen was given her, to write her name, she dropt it on the parchment, out of her trembling hand. Sir Charles saw her emotion with concern; and supported her as she stood. My dearest life, said he, take time —Be composed—putting the pen, with reverence, in her fingers.

She tried to write; but her pen would not touch the parchment, so as to mark it. She soon, how-

ever, made another effort, his arm round her waist—She then signed them; but Sir Charles held her hand, and the parchments in them, when she delivered them.—'As your act and deed, my dearest love?' said Sir Charles.—'Yes, indeed,' replied she, and made him a courtesy; hardly knowing what she did.

She must hear of this, when she can bear it. You charged me to be very minute on the behaviour of our Harriet: you was sure it would be a pattern. But, no; you see she is too timid.

She accompanied me to my chamber when we retired for the night. She sighed. I took notice of it.—O my Charlotte, said she, To-morrow! To-morrow!—

Will be the beginning of your happiness, my Harriet!—What virgin heart, but must have had joy, on her contemplating the man of sense and politeness, had his behaviour of this night *only* been the test of her judgment of him?

True; and I *have* joy: but the circumstance before me is a solemn one: and does not the obligation lie all on his side?

Does he behave to you, my love, as if he thought *any* of it did?

O no, no! But the fact is otherwise; and as *I* know it, the obligation is heightened by his polite goodness to me.

Dearly does he love his Harriet (to-morrow will you be *his* Harriet for life). Are you not convinced that he loves you?

I am, I am! But—

But what, my dear?

I never can deserve him. Hapless, hapless Clementina! she *only* could! Let a fortnight after to-morrow be over, and she be not *un*-happy, and what a thrice happy creature shall I be!

I kissed her glowing cheek.—Support yourself like a heroine to-morrow, my dear. You *will* have a task, because of the crowds which will attend you; but it is the tax you pay for being so excellent, and so much beloved.

Is it not strange, Lady G. that my grandmamma should join to support my uncle in his vehemence for a public day? Had it been only his command, I would have rebelled!

The pride they take in the alliance with my brother for his transcendent merit, is their motive; your grandmother's particularly. She considers the day as one of the happiest of her life: she has begged of me to support you in undergoing it. She says, If there should be a thousand spectators, she knows it will give pleasure to as many hearts; and to hers the more, for that reason. And you will be, continued I, so lovely a pair, when joined, that every beholder, man and woman, will give him to you; you to him.

You are very good, my dear Lady G. to encourage me thus: but I told my grandmother, this night, that she knew not the hardship she had imposed on me, by insisting on a public day: but I would not begin so great a change, whatever it cost me, by an act of opposition or disobedience to the will of so dear a parent. But your *brother*, my dear Lady G. continued she, who would have thought *he* would have given into it.

As your friends mean a compliment to my brother, replied I; so he, by his acquiescence, means one to you, and to them. He is not a confident man: he looks upon marriage in as awful light as you do; but he is not shy of making a public declaration of his love to the woman he has chosen. He has told me, talking of this very subject, that a public ceremony is not what, for your delicacy-sake, he

would have proposed: but *being* proposed, he would not, by any means, decline it. He had no concern but for you; and he took your acquiescence as a noble instance of your duty and obligingness to one of the most affectionate and worthy of parents.

O my dear Lady G. how good was you to come down! Support me in the arduous task of to-morrow! —You will not want my support, my love; you will have Sir Charles Grandison, bound, both by duty and love, to support you.

She threw her arms about me: I will endeavour to behave as I ought, in a circumstance that shall intitle me to such protection, and to such a sister.

My fidgetting lord thrust in (unsent for) his sharp face; and I chiding him for his intrusion, she slipt away, or I had designed to attend her to her chamber; and there, perhaps, should we have staid together most part of the night. If I had, I don't suppose that I should have deprived *her* of any rest. What makes my foolish heart throb for her? so happy as she is likely to be!—But sincerely do I love her.

I should have told you, that Emily behaved very prettily. Mr. Beauchamp had a rich opportunity to engage her, while the settlements were executing.

On our return to them, the poor girl was wiping her eyes. How now, Emily? said I, softly. O madam, Mr. Beauchamp has been telling me how ill Sir Harry is! His own eyes set mine the example. How I pity him! And how good he is!—No wonder my guardian loves him.

Beauchamp may possibly catch her in a weeping fit. The heart, softened by grief, will turn to a comforter. Our own grief produces pity for another pity, love. They are next neighbours, and will call in to ask kindly how a sufferer does: and what a heart must that be, that will not administer comfort

when it makes its neighbourly call, if comfort be in its power?

'Lord G. you are very impertinent.' I am in the scribbling vein, my Caroline. And here this man— 'Say another word, Lord G. and I'll sit up all night. Well, well, now you return not sauciness for threatening, I will have done.'

Good night—Good morrow, rather, Lady L.—O Lady L.! *Good* morrow may it be!

CH. G.

LETTER LII.

LADY G.
MISS SELBY, } TO LADY L.

THURSDAY morning, November 16.

YOU shall find me, my dear sister, as minute as you wish. Lucy is a charming girl. For the humour's sake, as well as to forward each other, on the joyful occasion, we shall write by turns.

It would look as if we had determined upon a public day, in the very face of it, were we to appear in full dresses: the contrary, therefore, was agreed upon yesterday. But every one, however, intends to be dressed as elegantly as morning-dresses will allow. Harriet, as you shall hear, is the least shewy. All in virgin white. She looks, she moves, an angel. I must go to the dear girl.—'Lucy, where are you?'

'Here, madam—But how can one write, when one's thoughts—'

'Write as I bid you. Have I not given you your cue?'

Lucy; taking up the pen.] Dear Lady L. I am in

a vast hurry. Lord W. Lady W. and Mr. Beauchamp, are come. Sir Charles; Mr. Deane, Mr. and Mrs. Reeves, have been here this *half-hour*. Has Lady G. dated?—No, I protest! We women are above such little exactnesses. Dear Lady L.! the gentlemen and ladies are all come. They say the church-yard is crowded with more of the living, than of the dead, and there is hardly room for a spade. What an image, on such a day! We are all out of our wits between joy and hurry. My cousin is not well; her heart misgives her! Foolish girl!—She is with her grandmamma and my grandmamma Selby. One gives her hartshorn, another salts. 'Lady G. Lady G. I must attend my dear Miss Byron: in an hour's time that will be her name no longer.'

Lady G.] Here, here, child—Our Harriet's better, Lady L. and ashamed of herself. Sir Charles was sent for up by her grandmother and aunt, to sooth her. Charming man! Tenderness and love are indeed tenderness and love in the brave and manly heart. Emily will not be married, on any consideration. There is terror, and not joy, she says, in the attending circumstances. Good Emily, continue to harden thy heart against love, and thoughts of wedlock, for two years to come; and then change thy mind, for Beauchamp's sake!

'Dear Lucy, a line or two more. Your uncle; I hear his voice, summoning—The man's mad; mad indeed, Lady L.—In *such* a hurry!'—Lucy, they are not yet all ready.

'Nor I, says the raptured saucy-face, to take up the pen—not a line more can I, will *I*, write, till the knot is tied.'

Nor I, my dear Lady L. till I can give you joy upon it.

I fib: for this hurrying soul himself, in driving every body else, has forgot to be quite ready.—But we are in very good time.

Emily was very earnest to be bride-maid, though advised to the contrary.

Mr. Beauchamp was a brideman, at his own request also.

I will go back to the early part of the morning.

We were each of us serenaded, as I may say, by direction of this joyful man uncle Selby (*awakened*, as he called it, to music) by James Selby, playing at each person's door an air or two, the words from an epithalamium (whose, I know not);

The day is come, you wish'd so long:
Love pick'd it out amidst the throng:
He destines to himself this sun,
And takes the reins, and drives it on.

It is indeed a fine day. The sun seemed to reproach some of us; but Harriet slept not a wink. No wonder.

I hastened to salute her. She was ready dressed. Charming readiness, my love! said I.

I took the opportunity while I was able, answered she.

Lucy, Nancy, were with her, both dressed, as she, for the day; that they might have nothing to do but attend her. What joy in their faces! What sweet carefulness in the lovely Harriet's!—And *will* this day, said she once, in a low voice, to me, give me to the lord of my heart?—Let not *grief* come near it; *joy* can be enough painful!

Lucy.] My cousin, her spirits over-hurried, was ready to faint in her grandmother's arms; but, revived by the soothings, the blessings of her venerable parent, soon recovered. Let nobody be frighted,

said her grandmother: affright not, by your hurryings, my lovely child! A little fatigued; her spirits are hurried: her joy is too much for them.

What a charming presence of mind has Mrs. Shirley! Lady G. bids me write any-thing to your ladyship, so I *will* but write; and forbids me apologizing either for manner or words.

Sir Charles was admitted. She stood up the moment she saw him, love and reverence in her sweet aspect. With a kind impatience he hastened to her, taking her hand, and pressing it with his lips—Resume your magnanimity, my dearest life: by God's blessing, with the man before you, you will have *more* than a chance for happiness.

Forgive me, Sir, said she, sitting down (she could hardly stand): I can have no doubt of your goodness: but it is a great day! The solemnity is an awful one!

It is a great, a solemn, day to *me*, my dearest creature! But encourage my joy by your smiles. It can suffer abatement only by giving you pain.

Generous goodness! But—

But *what*, my love? In compliment to the best of parents, to the kindest of uncles, resume your usual presence of mind. I, else, who shall glory before a thousand witnesses in receiving the honour of your hand, shall be ready to regret that I acquiesced so cheerfully with the wishes of those parental friends for a public celebration.

I have not been of late well, Sir: my mind is weakened. But it would be ungrateful, if I did not own to you, that my joy is as strong as my fear: it overcame me. I hope I shall behave better. You should not have been called to be a witness of my weakness—

This day, my dearest love, we call upon the world to be witness to our mutual vows. Let us shew

that world, that our hearts are one; and that the ceremony, sacred as it is, cannot make them more so. The engagement is a holy one: let us shew the multitude, as well as our surrounding friends, that we think it a laudable one. Once more I call upon you, my dearest life, to justify my joy by your *apparent* approbation. The world around you, loveliest of women, has been accustomed to see your *lovers*; shew them now the husband of your choice.

O Sir! you have given me a motive! I will think of it, throughout the whole sacred transaction. She looked around her, as if to see if every-body were ready that moment to attend her to church.

Lady G.] The ceremony is happily over; and I am retired to oblige my Caroline. When every-thing was ready, Mr. Selby thought fit to call us down in order into the great hall, marshalling his fours; and great pride and pleasure did he take in his office. At his first summons, down came the angel, and the four young ladies, and each of the four had her partner assigned her.

Emily seemed, between the novelty and the parade, to be wholly engaged.

Harriet, the moment she came down, flew to her grandmamma, and kneeled to her, Sir Charles supporting her as she kneeled, and as she arose. A tender and sweet sight!

The old lady threw her arms about her, and twice or thrice kissed her forehead; her voice faultering —God bless, bless, sustain my child!—Her aunt kissing her cheek: now, Now, my dearest love, whispered she, I call upon you for fortitude.

She visibly struggled for resolution; but seemed, in all her motions, to be in a hurry, as if afraid she should not hold it. She passed me with such a sweet confusion! Charming girl! said I, taking her hand,

as she passed, and giving way to her quick motions, for fear restraint should disconcert her.

When her uncle gave the word for moving, and approached to take her hand, she in her hurry, forgetting her cue, put it into Sir Charles's. Hold, hold, said her uncle, sweeping his bosom with his chin, in his arch way, that must not yet be. My brother, kissing her hand, presented it, in a very gallant manner, to her uncle. I yield it to you, Sir, said he, as a precious trust; in an hour's time to be confirmed mine by divine, as well as human sanctions.

Mr. Selby led the lovely creature to the coach, but stopt at the door with her, for Mrs. Shirley's going in first: the servants at distance all admiring, and blessing, and praying, for their beloved young lady.

Sir Charles with tender care supported Mrs. Shirley. What honour you do me, Sir! said she. I think I may throw away *this* (meaning her ebony crutch-stick): Do I ail any-thing? Her feet, however, seconded not her spirits. My brother lifted her into the coach. It was so natural to him to be polite, that he offered his hand to his beloved Harriet; but was checked by her uncle (in his usual pleasant manner): Stay your time, too ready Sir, said he. Thank God it will not be long before *both* hands will be yours.

The coach-way was lined with spectators. Mr. Selby, it seems, bowed all the way, in return to the salutes of his acquaintance. Have you never, Lady L. called for the attention of your company in your coach, to something that has passed in the streets, or on the road, and at the same time thrust your head through the window so that nobody could see but yourself? So it was with Mr. Selby, I doubt not. He wanted every one to look in at the happy pair; but took care that hardly any body but himself should

be seen. I asked him, afterwards, If it were not so? He knew not, he said, but it might. I told him, he had a very jolly comely face to shew, but no head. He does not spare me: but true jests are not always the most welcome. Tell a lady of forty, that she is sixty or seventy, and she will not be so angry as if she were guessed to be eight or nine-and-thirty. The one nobody will believe; the other every-body. My Lord G. I can tell you, fares well in Mr. Selby's company.

'Lucy, my dear girl, take the pen—You don't know, you say, what I wrote last—Read it, my girl —You have it—Take the pen; I want to be among them.'

Lucy.] Lady G. must have her jest, whether in the right place, or not. Excuse me, both sisters. How *could* she, however, in a part so interesting? She says, I must give an account of the procession, and she will conduct them into the church; I out of it. I cannot, she says, after so many wishes, so many suspenses, so much expectation, before it came to this, be too minute. Every woman's heart leaps, when a wedding is described; and wishes to know all, *how and about it*. Your ladyship will know, that these words are Lady G.'s own: but what can I say of the procession?

The poor Harriet—Fie upon me—The *rich* Harriet, was not sorry, I believe, that her uncle's head, now on this side, now on the other, in a manner, filled the coach: but when it stopt at the church-yard, an inclosed one, whose walls keep off coaches near a stone's throw from the church-porch, then was my lovely cousin put to it; especially as her grandmother walked so slow. We were all out of our coaches before the father and the bride entered the porch. I should tell your ladyship, that the

passage from the entrance of the church-yard to the church is railed in. Every Sunday the crowd (gathered to see the gentry go in and come out) are accustomed to be bounded by these rails; and were the more contentedly so now: the whole church-yard seemed one mass (but for that separating passage) of living matter, distinguished only by separate heads; not a hat on the men's; pulled off, perhaps, by general consent, for the convenience of seeing, more than from designed regard in *that* particular. But, in the main, never was there such silent respect shewn, on the like occasion, by mortal mob.

But one pretty spectacle it is impossible to pass by. Four girls, tenants daughters, the eldest not above thirteen, appeared with neat wicker-baskets in their hands, filled with such flowers as could be procured in this late season of the year. Cheerful way was made for them. As soon as the bride, and father, and Sir Charles, and Mrs. Shirley, alighted, these pretty little Flora's, all dressed in white, chaplets of artificial flowers for head-dresses, large nosegays in their bosoms, white ribbands adorning their stays and their baskets; some streaming down, others tied round the handles in true lovers' knots; attended the company; two going before; the two others here and there, and every-where; all strewing flowers: a pretty thought of the tenants among themselves. Sir Charles seemed much pleased with them: Pretty dears he calls them, in their hearing.

God bless you, and *God* bless you, was echoed from many mouths. Your brother's attention was chiefly employed on Mrs. Shirley, because of her age and lameness. Here my good Lady G. perhaps would stop to remark upon the worthy nature of the English populace, when good characters attract their admiration; for even the populace took

notice, how right a thing it was for the finest young gentleman their eyes ever beheld, to take such care of so good an old lady. He *deserved* to live to be old himself, one said: they would warrant, others said, that he was a sweet-tempered man; and others, that he had a good heart. In the procession each of us picked up our praises. Though Lady G. Lady W. and the four bride-maids, as well as the lords, might have claimed high notice; yet not any of them received more than commendation: we were all considered but as satellites to the planets that passed before us. What, indeed, were we more? But let me say that Mrs. Shirley had her share in reverence, as the lovely couple had theirs in admiration.

The churchwardens themselves were so complaisant as to stand at the church-door, and opened it, on the approach of the bride, and her nuptial father. But all the pews near the altar were, however, filled (one or two excepted, which seemed to be left for the company) with well-dressed women of the neighbourhood: and though they seemed to intend to shut the doors after we had all got in, the church was full of people. Mr. Selby was displeased, for his niece's sake; who, trembling, could hardly walk up to the altar. Sir Charles seated his venerable charge on a covered bench on the left side of the altar; and by her, and on another covered bench on the right side, without the rails, we all, but the bride-maids and their partners, took our seats. They stood, the men on the bridegroom's side; the maids on Harriet's.—Never—

Lady G.] 'Are you within the church, Lucy? —You are, I protest. Let me read what you have done. Come, pretty well, pretty well—You were

going to praise my brother: leave that to me. I have an excellent knack at it.'

Never was man so much, and so deservedly, admired. He saw his Harriet wanted support and encouragement. The minister stood suspended a few moments, as doubting whether she would not faint. My dearest love, whispered Sir Charles, remember you are doing honour to the happy, thrice happy, man of your choice: shew he *is* your choice, in the face of this congregation.—Pardon me, Sir! I will endeavour to be all you wish me.

Sir Charles bowed to the minister to begin the sacred office. Mr. Selby, with all his bravery, trembled, and, overcome by the solemnity of the preparation, looked now pale, now red. The whole congregation were hushed and silent, as if nobody were in the church but persons immediately concerned to be there. Emily changed colour frequently. She had her handkerchief in her hand: and (pretty enough!) her sister bride-maids, little thinking that Emily had a reason for her emotion, which none of them had, pulled out *their* handkerchiefs too, and *permitted* a gentle tear or two to steal down their glowing cheeks. I fixed my eye on Emily, sitting outward, to keep her in order. The doctor began—'*Dearly beloved*'—Ah, Harriet! thought I; thou art much quieter now, than once thou wert at these words *.

No *impediments* were confessed by either of the parties, when they were referred to by the minister, on this head. I suppose this reference would have been omitted by Sir Hargrave's snuffling parson. To the question, to my brother, '*Wilt thou have,*'

* When Sir Hargrave Pollexfen would have compelled her to be his, vol. 1. p. 229.

&c. he cheerfully answered, *I will.* Harriet did not say, *I will not.* '*Who giveth this woman,*' &c. I, I, I, said uncle Selby; and he owns, that he had much ado to refrain saying—'With all my heart and soul!' Sir Charles seemed to have the office *by* heart; Harriet *in* her heart: for before the minister could take the right-hand of the good girl to put it into that of my brother, his hand knew its office; nor did her trembling hand decline the favour. Then followed the words of acceptancc; '*I Charles, take thee, Harriet,*' &c. on *his* part; which he audibly and with apparent joy and reverence in his countenance, repeated after the minister. But not quite so alert was Harriet, in *her* turn: her hand was rather taken, than offered. Her lips, however, moved after the minister; nor seemed to hesitate at the little piddling word *obey;* which, I remember, gave a qualm to my poor heart, on the like occasion. The ring was presented. The doctor gave it to Sir Charles; who put it on the finger of the most charming woman in England; repeating after the minister, audibly, '*With this ring I thee wed,*' &c. She brightened up; when the minister, joining their right-hands, read, '*Those whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.*' And the minister's address to the company, declaring the marriage, and pronouncing them man and wife, in the name of the Holy Trinity; and his blessing them, swelled, she owns, her grateful heart, ready to bursting. In the responses, I could not but observe, that the congregation generally joined, as if they were interested in the celebration.

Sir Charles, with a joy that lighted up a more charming flush than usual on his face, his lively soul looking out at his fine eyes, yet with an air as modest as respectful, did credit to our sex before the applauding multitude, by bending his knee to his

sweet bride, on taking her hand, and saluting her, on the conclusion of the ceremony—May God, my dearest life, said he, audibly, be gracious to *your* Grandison, as he will be good to *his* Harriet, now no more Byron!—She courtesied low, and with so modest a grace, that every soul blessed her; and pronounced her the loveliest of women, and him the most graceful and polite of men.

Mr. Selby invited Dr. Curtis to the wedding-dinner, and led Sir Charles's bride into the vestry.

She was followed by her virgin train; they by their partners.

She threw herself, the moment she beheld her grandmother, at her feet. Bless, madam, your happy, happy child.

God for ever bless the darling of my heart!

Sir Charles bent his knee to the venerable lady, with such a *condescending* dignity, if I may so express myself; Receive and bless, also, your son, my Harriet's reverend parent, and mine.

The dear lady was affected. She slid off her seat on her knees, and with up-lifted hands and eyes, tears trickling on her cheeks; Thou, Almighty, bless the dear son of my wishes!

He raised her, with pious tenderness, and saluted her. Excellent lady!—He would have said more, but was affected—Every body was—And having seated the old lady, he turned to Mrs. Selby—Words are poor, said he; my actions, my behaviour, shall speak the grateful sense I have of your goodness, saluting her; of yours, madam, to Mrs. Shirley; and of yours, my dearest life, addressing himself to his lovely bride, who seemed hardly able to sustain her joy, on so respectful a recognition of relation to persons so dear to her. Let me once more, added he, bless the hand that has blessed me!

She cheerfully offered it: I give you, Sir, my hand,

said she, courtesying, and with it a poor heart—A poor heart, indeed! But it is a grateful one! It is all your own!

He bowed upon her hand. He spoke not. He seemed as if he could not speak.

Joy, joy, joy, was wished the happy pair, from every mouth. 'See, my dear young ladies,' said the happy and instructing Mrs. Shirley, addressing herself to them, 'the reward of duty, virtue, and obedience! How unhappy must those parents and relations be, whose daughters, unlike our Harriet, have disgraced themselves, and their families, by a shameful choice—As my Harriet's *is*, such, looking around her, be *your* lot, my amiable daughters!'

They every one saluted her; and some by speech, all by looks and courtesies, promised to cherish the memory of this happy transaction, for their benefit.

Emily, when she approached the venerable lady, sobbing, said, Bless me also, my dear grandmamma Shirley!—Let me be your own grand-daughter.—She embraced and blessed the dear girl!—Ah, my love, said she, but *will* you supply the place of my Harriet to me? *Will* you be my Harriet? *Will* you live with me, and Mrs. Selby—as Harriet did?—Emily started: Ah, madam, you are all goodness, let me try to make myself, in some little way, agreeable to my dear Miss Byron that was, and live a little while in the sun-shine of my guardian's eye; and then how proud shall I be to be thought, in any the least degree, like your Harriet!

This I thought a good hint of Mrs. Shirley. Our Harriet (my dear Caroline) shall not be made unhappy by the chit; nor shall the dear girl neither, if I can help it, be made so by her own foible. We will watch over both, for the good of both, and for the tranquillity of the best of men.

Beauchamp's joy shone through a cloud, because of his father's illness; but it *did* shine.

Mr. Selby and my lord were vastly alive. Lord L. was fervent in *his* joy, and congratulations; but he was wiser than both put together. Nothing was wanting to shew that he was excessively pleased; but I was afraid the other two would not have considered the vestry as part of the church; and would have struck up a tune without music.

How sincerely joyful, also, were Lord and Lady W.! My lord's eyes burst into tears more than once: Nephew, and dear nephew, at every word, whether speaking of or to my brother; as if he thought the relation he stood in to him, a greater glory than his peerage, or aught else that he valued himself upon, his excellent lady excepted.

Upon my honour, Caroline, I think, as I have often said, that people may be *very* happy, if not *most* happy, who set out with a moderate stock of love, and supply what they want in that with prudence. I really think, that my brother and Harriet cannot be happier than are now this worthy couple; times of life considered on both sides, and my lord's inferior capacity allowed for. For certainly, men of sense are most capable of joyful sensations, and have their balances; since it is *as* certain, that they are also most susceptible of painful ones. What, then, is the stuff, the nonsense, that romantic girls, their romancing part of life not wholly elapsed, prate about, and din one's ears with, of *first* love, *first* flame, but *first* folly? Do not most of such give indication of gunpowder constitutions, that want but the match to be applied, to set them into a blaze? Souls of tinder, discretions of flimsy gauze, that conceal not their folly—One day they will think as I do; and perhaps before they have daugh-

ters who will *convince* them of the truth of my assertion.

But here comes Lucy.—'My dear girl, take the pen—I am too *sentimental.* The French only are proud of sentiments at this day; the English cannot bear them: story, story, story, is what they hunt after, whether sense or nonsense, probable or improbable.'

Lucy.] 'Bless me, Lady G.! you have written a great deal in a little time. What am I to do?'

Lady G.] You brought the happy pair into the church. I have told Lady L. what was done there: you are to carry them out.

Lucy.] 'And so I will.'—My dearest love, said her charming man to my cousin, who had a little panic on the thoughts of going back through so great a crowd, imagine, as you walk, that you see nobody but the happy man whom you have honoured with your hand: every-body will praise and admire the loveliest of women. Nobody, I hope, will blame your choice. Remember at whose request it was, that you are put upon this difficulty: your grandmamma's and uncle's. She, one of the best of women, was so married to one of the best of men. I was but acquiescent in it. Shew, my dearest life, all your numerous admirers and well-wishers, that you are not ashamed of your choice.

O Sir! how charmingly do you strengthen my mind! I will shew the world, that my choice is my glory.

Every-body being ready, she gave her hand to the beloved of her heart.

The bells were set a ringing the moment the solemnity was concluded; and Sir Charles Grandison, the son of our venerable Mrs. Shirley, the nephew of my uncle and aunt Selby, husband of my dear

and ever-dear Harriet, and the esteemed of every heart, led his graceful bride through a lane of applauding and decent-behaving spectators, down through the church—and still more thronging multitudes in the church-yard; the four little Flora's again strewing flowers at their feet, as they passed. My sweet girls, said he, to two of them, I charge you complete the honour you have done us, by your presence at Selby-house: you will bring your companions with you.

My uncle looked around him as he led Mrs. Shirley: *so* proud! and *so* stately! By some undesigned change, Mr. Beauchamp led Miss Jervois. She seemed pleased, and happy; for he whispered to her, all the way, praises of her guardian. *My* guardian, twice or thrice, occasionally, repeated she aloud, as if she boasted of standing in some relation to him.

The bride and bridegroom stopt for Mrs. Shirley, a little while, at the coach-side: a very grateful accident to the spectators: he led them both in, with a politeness that attends him in all he does. We came back in the order we went.

'Now, my dear Lady G. you, who never were from the side of your dear new sister for the rest of the day, resume the pen.'

Lady G.] 'I will, my dear; but in a new letter This fourth sheet is written down to the very edge Caroline will be impatient: I will send away this.'

Joy to my sister! Joy to my aunt! Joy to the earl! To Lady Gertrude! To our dear Dr. Bartlett! To every one, on an event so happy; and so long wished for by us all!

'Sign, Lucy, sign.'

'After your ladyship.'

There, then, CHARLOTTE G.

And, *There, then,* LUCY SELBY.

LETTER LIII.

LADY G. TO LADY L. IN CONTINUATION.

This happy event has been so long wished for by us all; we are so much delighted with the bride, as well as the bridegroom; so many uncertainties, so many suspenses, have fallen in; so little likelihood once that it ever would have been; and you are so miserably tied by the leg, poor Caroline! and so little to divert you, besides the once smiling to the ten times squalling of your little stranger; that compassion, love, both incite me to be minute; that so you may be as much with us in idea, as we all wished you could have been in person.

Crowds of people lined the way, in our return from church, as well as in our way to it; and blessings were pronounced upon the happy pair, by hundreds, at their alighting at Selby-house.

When we were all assembled in the great hall, mutual congratulations flowed from every mouth: then did every man salute the happy bride: then did the equally-happy bridegroom salute every lady —There was among us the height of joy; joy becoming the awful solemnity; and every one was full of the decent behaviour, and the delight expressed by the crowds of spectators of all ranks, and both sexes; a delight and decency worthy of the characters of the admirable pair: and Miss Nedham declared, and all the young ladies joined with her, that if she could be secure of the like good behaviour and encouragement, she would never think of a private wedding for herself. Mr. Selby himself was overjoyed too much, even to utter a jest! Now, now, he said, he had attained the height of his ambition.

The dear Harriet *could* look up: she *could* smile around her. I led her, with Lucy, into the cedar-parlour—Now, my dear love, said I, the moment we entered it, throwing my arms about her, just as her lips were joyfully opening to speak to me, do I salute my real sister, my sister Grandison, in my dear Lady L.'s name, as well as in my own: God Almighty confirm and establish your happiness!

My dearest, dearest Lady G. how grateful, how encouraging, to my heart, is your kind salutation! Your continued love, and that of my dear Lady L. will be essential to my happiness.

May our hearts be ever united! replied I. But they must: for were not our minds kindred minds before?

But you must love my Lucy, said she, presenting her to me—You must love my grand---Mamma, said I, catching the word from her, your aunt, your uncle, your cousins, and your cousins cousins, to the twentieth generation—And so I will: ours yours: yours ours! We are all of one family, and will be for ever.

What a happy creature am I! replied she—How many people can *one* good man make so!—But where is my Emily, sweet girl? Bring to me, Lucy, bring to me, my Emily!

Lucy went out, and led in the dear girl. With hands and eyes uplifted, My dear Miss Byron, that was, now Lady Grandison, said she, love me; love your Emily. I am now *your* Emily, *your* ward; love me as well as you did when Miss Byron.

Harriet threw her arms about her neck; I do, I will, I must: you shall be my sister, my friend; *my* Emily now, indeed! Love me, as I will love you; and you shall find *your* happiness in *mine*.

Sir Charles entered, his Beauchamp with him; taking her hand, he kissed it. Once more, said he,

do I thank my dearest life for the honour she has done me: then with his other hand taking his Beauchamp's, he presented each to the other, as brother and sister.

Beauchamp, in a graceful manner, bowed on her hand: she courtesied to him with an air of dignity and esteem.

He then turning to Emily; Acknowledge, my dear, said he, your elder sister: my Harriet will love her Emily. Receive, my dearest life, your ward. Yet (to Emily) I acquit not myself of the power, any more than of the will, of obliging you at first hand.

O Sir! said the sobbing girl, you are all goodness! But I will make no request to you, but through my dearest Lady Grandison's mediation. If she approves of it first, I shall not doubt of its fitness to be complied with.

Was not that pretty in Emily?—O how Beauchamp's eyes loved her!

But why, ladies, said Sir Charles, do you sequester yourselves from the company? Are we not all of a family to-day? The four little Flora's, with their baskets in their hands, were entering the gate, as I came in: receive them, my love, with your usual graciousness. We will join the company, and call them in. My Beauchamp, you are a brideman; restore my bride to her friends and admirers within.

He took Emily's hand. She looked *so* proud!—Harriet gave hers to Beauchamp. We followed them into the great hall: Mr. Selby had archness in his look, and seemed ready to blame us for withdrawing.—Sir Charles was aware of him. My dear Mr. Selby, said he, will you not allow us to see the pretty Flora's?—By all means, said Mr. Selby; and hurried out, and introduced them.

Sweet pretty girls! We had more leisure to consi-

der the elegant rusticity of their dresses and appearance. They had their baskets in their hands, and a courtesy and a blush ready for every one in company. Sir Charles seemed to expect that his bride would take notice of them first; but observing that she wanted presence of mind, he stept to them; took each by the hand, called them pretty loves; and put into each basket, wrapped up in paper, five guineas: then presented them, two in each hand, to his bride; who, by that time, was better prepared to receive them with that sweet ease and familiarity which give grace to all she says and does.

The children afterwards desiring to go to their parents, the noble Beauchamp himself, accompanied by Lord G. led them to them, and returned, with a request from all the tenants, that they might have the honour, sometime in the day, to see the bride and bridegroom among them, were it but for two minutes. What says my love? said Sir Charles. O, Sir! I cannot, cannot.—Well, then, I will attend them, to make your excuse, as well as I can. She bowed her thanks.

The time before dinner was devoted to conversation. Sir Charles was nobody's; no, not very particularly his bride's: he put every one upon speaking in turn. For about half an hour he sat between the joyful Mrs. Shirley and Mrs. Selby; but even then, in talking to them, talked to the whole company: yet, in his air and manner to both, shewed so much respect, as needed not the aid of a particular address to them in words.

This was observed to me by good Lord L. For Harriet (uneasy, every eye continually upon her, thoughtful, bashful) withdrawing, a little before dinner, with a cast of her eye to me, I followed her to her dressing-room. There, with so much expressiveness of meaning, though not of language; so much

tenderness of love; so much pious gratitude; so much true virgin sensibility; did she open her heart to me; that I shall ever revolve what passed in that conversation, as the true criterion of virgin delicacy unmingled with affectation. Nor was I displeased, that, in the height of her grateful self-congratulation, she more than once acknowledged a sigh for the admirable Clementina. We just began to express our pleasure and our hopes in the good behaviour of our Emily, when we were called to dinner.

It was a sumptuous one.

Mr. Selby was very orderly, upon the whole: but he remembered, he said, that when *he* was married (and he called upon his dame to confirm it) he was obliged to wait on his bride, and the company; and he insisted upon it, that Sir Charles should.

No, no, no, every one said; and the bride looked a little serious upon it: but Sir Charles, with an air of gaiety that infinitely became him, took a napkin from the butler; and putting it under his arm, I have only one request to make you, my dear Mr. Selby—When I am more awkward than I ought to be, do you correct me; and I shall have both pride and pleasure in the task.

Adad! said Mr. Selby, looking at him with pleasure—You may *be* any-thing, *do* any-thing; you cannot conceal the gentleman. Ads-heart, you must always be the first man in company—Pardon me, my lords.

Sir Charles was the modestest servitor that ever waited at table, while his napkin was under his arm: but he laid it down, while he addressed himself to the company, finding something to say to each, in his pithy, agreeable manner, as he went round the table. He made every one happy. With what delight did the elder ladies look upon him, when he addressed himself to each of them! He stopt at the bride's

chair, and made her a compliment with an air of tenderness. I heard not what it was, sitting at distance; but she looked grateful, pleased; smiled, and blushed. He passed from her to the bride-maids, and again complimented each of them. They also seemed delighted with what he said. Then going to Mr. Selby; Why don't you bid me resume the napkin, Sir?—No, no; we see what you can do: your conformity is enough for me. You may now sit down, when you please. You make the waiters look awkward.

He took his seat, thanked Mr. Selby for having reminded him of his duty, as he called it, and was all himself, the most graceful and obliging of men. You know, my dear Lady L. how much I love to praise my brother. *My* poor lord!—I am glad, however, that he has a tolerable good set of teeth—They were always visible. A good honest sort of man, though, Lady L. whatever *you* may think of him.

After dinner, at Mr. Selby's reminding motion, Sir Charles and the men went to the tenants. They all wished him joy; and, as they would not sit down while he stood, Sir Charles took a seat among them, and all the rest followed his example.

One of the honest men, it seems, remembered the nuptials of Mr. and Mrs. Byron, and praised them as the best and happiest of the human race: others confirmed *his* character of both: another knew the late Mr. Shirley, and extolled him as much: another remembered the birth, another the christening, of the bride; and others talked of what an excellent creature she was from infancy. Let me tell you, Sir, said one grey-headed man, you will have much ado to deserve her; and yet you are said to be as good as you are handsome. The women took up the cause: they were sure, by what they had heard, if

any man in the world could deserve the bride, it was Sir Charles Grandison; and they would swear for him by his looks. One of the honest men said, they should all have taken it as a *hugeous* favour, were they allowed to wish the bride joy, though at ever so great a *distance*.

Sir Charles said, He was sure the women would excuse her this day; and then the men would, in complaisance to them. We will hope, said he, looking round him, before we leave Northamptonshire, for one happy dinner together.

They all got up to bow and courtesy, and looked upon each other; and the men, who are most of them freeholders, wished to the Lord for a new election, and that he would come among them. They had no great matter of fault to find, they said, with their present representatives; but any-body who would oppose Sir Charles Grandison, would stand no chance. The women joined in the declaration, as if they thought highly, as Sir Charles pleasantly observed, of their own influence over their husbands. They all wondered that he was not in parliament, till they heard how little a while he had been in England.

He took leave of the good people (who, by their behaviour and appearance, did as much credit to their landlords as to themselves) with his usual affability and politeness; repeating his promise of a day of jubilee, as some of them called it.

The ball, at the request of the whole company, was opened by the bride and bridegroom. She was very uneasy at the general call. Sir Charles saw she was, and would have taken out Miss Nedham; but it was not permitted. The dear creature, I believe, did her best at the time; but I have seen her perform better: yet she did exceedingly well. But such a

figure herself, and such a partner; How could she do amiss?

Emily was taken out by Beauchamp. He did his best, I am sure; and almost as much excelled his pretty partner, as his beloved friend did his.

Emily, sitting down by me, asked if she did not perform very ill. Not *very* ill, my dear, said I; but not so well as I have seen you dance. I don't know, said she, what ails me: my heart is very heavy, madam. What can be the meaning of it? But don't tell Lady Grandison so.—Heigh ho!—Lady Grandison! What a sound is that? A charming sound! But how shall I bring my lips to be familiarized to it?

You are glad she is married, my love, I dare say?

Glad! To be sure I am! It is an event that I have long, long wished for: but new names, and new titles, one knows not how to frame one's mouth to presently. It was some time before I could call you Lady G. But don't you pity poor Lady Clementina, a little, madam?

A great deal, I do. But as she refused my brother—

Ah! dear! that's the thing! I wonder she could—when he would have let her have the free exercise of her religion.

Had you rather your guardian had married Lady Clementina, Emily?

O no! How can you ask me such a question, madam? Of all the women in the world, I wished him to have Miss Byron. But she is too happy for pity, you know, madam!—Bless me! What does she look so thoughtful for? Why does she sigh so? Surely she can't be sorry!

Sorry! No, my love! But a change of condition

for life! New attachments! A new course of life! The property, person and will, of another, excellent as the man is; obliged to go to a new house; to be ingrafted into a new family; to leave her own, who so dearly love her; an *irrevocable* destiny!—Do you think, Emily, new in her present circumstances, every eye upon her, it is not enough to make a considerate mind, as hers is, thoughtful?

All these are mighty hardships, madam! putting up her lip—But, Lady G. can you suppose she thinks them so? If she *does*—But she is a dear good lady!—I shall ever love her. She is an ornament of our sex! See, how lovely she looks! Did your ladyship ever see so sweet a creature? I never did.

Not for beauty, dignity, ease, figure, modesty, good sense, did I ever!

She is my *guardianess*, may I say? Is there such a word?—I shall be as proud of her, as I am of my guardian. Yet there is no cause of sighing, I think. —See my guardian! her husband! Unfashionable as the word is, it is a pretty word. The *house-band*, that ties all together. Is not *that* the meaning?—Look round! How does he surpass all men!—*His* ease, talk of ease! *His* dignity, talk of dignity! As handsome a man, as she is a woman! See how every young lady eyes him; every young gentleman endeavours to imitate him. I wish *he* would take me out; I would do better.

This was the substance of the whispering dialogue that passed between Emily and me—Poor girl!

Mr. Selby danced with Lucy, and got great applause. He was resolved, he said, to have one dance with the bride. She besought him not to think of it. Her grandmamma, her aunt, entreated for her. She desired Sir Charles to interpose—If, my dearest life,

you *could* oblige your uncle—I cannot, cannot think of it, said she.

Lady G. said Sir Charles, be so good as to challenge Mr. Selby. I stood forth, and offered my hand to him. He could not refuse it. He did not perform so well as he did with Lucy. Go, said I, when we had done, sit down by your dame, and be quiet: you have lost all your credit. *You* dance with a bride!—Some people know not how to bear applause; nor to leave off when they are well. Lord L. took out Mrs. Selby. She dances very gracefully. Your lord, you know, is above praise. The young Lord Reresby and Miss Nedham distinguished themselves. *My* odd creatare was in his element. He and Miss Barclay, and another time he and Emily, did very handsomely; and the girl got up her reputation. Lord W. did hobble, and not ungracefully, with old Mrs. Selby; who had not danced, she said, for twenty years before; but, on so joyful an occasion, would not refuse Lord W.'s challenge: and both were applauded; the time of life of the lady, the limpingness of my lord, considered.

There was a very plentiful sideboard, of rich wines, sweetmeats, &c.

We all disclaimed formal supper.

We went afterwards into country-dances.

Mrs. Shirley retired about ten. Harriet took the opportunity of attending her. I had an intimation to follow.

I found her just dropt on her knees to her grandmamma; who, with her arms about her neck, was folding to her fond heart the darling of it.

I was called upon to give my opinion, whether she should return to the company, or not: I gave it, that she should; and that she should retire, for the night, about eleven. As to the bride-maids, I said, I would

manage, that they should only attend her to her chamber, and leave her there, with her aunt, Lucy, and me. Lord L. had undertaken to make the gentlemen give up form; which, he said, they would the more easily do, as they were set into dancing.

After all, Lady L. we women, dressed out in ribbands, and gaudy trappings, and in virgin-white, on our wedding-days, seem but like milk-white heifers led to sacrifice. We ought to be indulged, if we are not shameless things, and very wrong indeed, in our choice of the man we *can* love.

When we returned to the company, Mr. Selby broke from his partner, Miss Barclay, to whisk into the figure the bride.

Sir Charles joined the deserted lady, who seemed much better pleased with her new partner than with her old one.

Lord W. who was sitting down, took Mrs. Selby's hand, and led her into the dance.

I drew Miss Nedham to the sideboard, and gave her her cue: she gave theirs to the three other bride-maids.

About eleven, Mrs. Selby, unobserved, withdrew with the bride. The bride-maids, one by one to be the less observed, waited on her to her chamber; saluted her, and returned to company.

The dear creature wanted presence of mind. She fell into my reflection above. O my dear Lady G.! said she, was I not right when I declared, that I never would marry, were it not to the man I loved above all the men in the world?

She complimented me twenty times, with being very good. She prayed for me; but her prayers were meant for herself.

You remember, that she told me, on my apprehensiveness on the like occasion, that fear made me loving to her. On her blessing me, Ah, Harriet,

said I, you now find, that apprehension will make one *pious*, as well as *loving*.

My sister, my friend, my own, my Caroline's, my brother's, *dear* Lady Grandison! said I, when I left her, near undressed, God bless you! And God be praised, that I can call you by these tender names! My brother is the happiest of men; you of women. May we never love each other less than we do now! Look forward to the serene happiness of your future lot. If you are the joy of our brother, you must be our joy, and the jewel of our family.

She answered me only by a fervent embrace, her eyes lifted up, surcharged, as I may say, with tears of joy, as in thankfulness.

I then rushed down-stairs, and into the company.

My brother instantly addressed me—My Harriet, whispered he, with impatience, returns not this night.

You will see Mrs. Selby, I presume, by-and-by, returned I.

He took his seat by old Mrs. Selby, and fell into talk with her, to avoid joining in the dances. Mrs. Selby, at last, came in. Her eyes shewed the tender leave she had taken of her Harriet.

My brother approached her. She went out: he followed her.

In a quarter of an hour she returned.

We saw my brother no more that night.

We continued our dancings till between three and four.

I have often observed, that we women, whether weakly or robust, are hardly ever tired with dancing. It was so with us. The men, poor souls! looked silly, and sleepy, by two; all but my ape: he has a good many *femalities*, as uncle Selby calls them. But

he was brought up to be idle and useless, as women generally are.

I *must* conclude my letters whimsically, my dear: if I did not, you would not know them to be written by your

CHARLOTTE G.

LETTER LIV.

LADY G. IN CONTINUATION.

Emily, Lucy, and I, went to pay our morning compliments as soon as we arose, which was not very early, to my brother, being told that he was in the cedar parlour, writing. He received us like himself. I am writing, said he, a few very short letters. They are to demand the felicitations, one, of our beloved Caroline; one of our aunt Grandison; one of the Earl of G. and one of our dear Dr. Bartlett. There is another; you may read it, Charlotte.

That also was a short one; to signify, according to promise, as I found, to Signor Jeronymo della Porretta, the actual celebration of his nuptials.

I returned it to him—'Like my brother,' was all I said.

It concluded with a caution, given in the most ardent terms, against precipitating the admirable Clementina.

We went up to the bride. She was dressing. Her aunt was with her, and her two cousin Holles's, who went not home the preceding night.

The moment we entered, she ran to us, and clasped her arms about my neck. My dearest,

dearest Lady G. am I indeed your sister, your sister Grandison?

My dearest, lovely sister! My own sister Grandison! My brother's wife! Most sincerely do I repeat, Joy, joy, joy, to my Harriet!

O Lady G.! How you raise me! Your goodness is a seasonable goodness to me! I never, never, but by yours and your sister's example, shall be worthy of your brother!

Then embracing Emily; My sweet young friend, in *my* happiness you shall find your *own!*

Emily wept, and even sobbed—You must, you must, treat me less kindly, madam. I cannot, cannot bear your good—your goodness. On my knees I acknowledge my other guardian. God bless my dear, dear Lady Grandison!

At that moment, as they were folded in each other's arms, entered my brother—He clasped his round his sweet bride: Pardon this intrusion, said he—Excellent creature, continue to love my Emily!—Continue, my Emily, to deserve the sisterly love of my Harriet!

Then turning to me, saluting me, My Charlotte loves my Harriet; so does our Caroline. She fondly loves you both. God continue your love to each other! What a sister has yesterday's happy event given to each other!—What a wife to me!—We will endeavour, my love (to her) to *deserve* our happiness; and, I humbly trust, it will be continued to us.

He saluted Mrs. Selby—My own aunt Selby! What obligations am I under to you, and to our venerable Mrs. Shirley, for giving to an angel an angel's education, and conferring on *me* the blessing!

Congratulate me, my dear cousin Holles's, salut-

ing each. May you both be as happy, whenever you alter your single estate, as I will endeavour to make your lovely cousin!

He withdrew with so much respectfulness to the happy Harriet, as delighted us all.

Lucy went with him, to pay her morning compliments to the two grandmamma's.

Sister, said Kitty Holles, after he was gone—we never, never, can think of marrying, after we have seen Sir Charles Grandison, and his behaviour.

Lucy returned with Nancy. They embraced their cousin. Your grandmamma and my grandmamma, my dearest cousin, are impatient to see you, in *your* grandmamma's chamber; and the gentlemen are crying out for their breakfasts in the great parlour. We hurried into Mrs. Shirley's apartment. The bride threw herself at her grandmamma's feet, for her blessing. It was given in such a tender and pious manner, that we were all affected by it. The best of sons, of men, said she, afterwards, has but just left me. What a blessing to all around him, is a good man! Sir Charles Grandison is every-thing. But, my dear loves, to the younger ladies, let a good man, let life, let manners, be the principal motive of your choice: in *goodness* will you have every sanction; and your fathers, mothers, relations, friends, every joy! My dearest child, my Harriet, taking her hand, there was a time that I thought no man on earth could deserve you: now it is my prayer, and will be, that you may deserve this man. But let us join the gentlemen. Fear not, my Harriet—Sir Charles's character will preserve with every one its dignity, and give a sanction to the solemnity that has united you to him. My dearest love! be proud, and look assured: *you* may, or who can? Yesterday's transaction is your glory; glory in it, my Harriet!

We attended the two elder ladies down. Harriet, as bashful people ever do, increased her own difficulties, by staying behind with her Lucy. We were all seated at the breakfast-tables, and staid for them: Mr. Selby grew impatient; every one having declared themselves ready for breakfast. At last, down came the blushing bride, with her Lucy. Sir Charles seeing Mr. Selby's countenance turning peevishly arch; just as he had begun, 'Let me tell you, niece,' and was coming out with something, he arose, and taking his bride's hand, led her to her seat. Hush, my dear Mr. Selby, said he: nobody must call to account my wife, and I present. —How, Sir! How, Sir! Already have I lost my niece?

Not so, Mr. Selby. All her duties will have strength given them by the happy event of yesterday: but you must not let a new-married man see how much easier it is to find fault than to be faultless.

Your servant, Sir! replied Mr. Selby—You'll one day pay for your complaisance, or my niece is not a woman. But I was ready primed. You have robbed me of a jest; and that, let me tell you, would have been more to me than my breakfast.

After breakfast, Lucy gave us a lesson on the harpsichord. Sir Charles accompanied her finger, at the desire of the company.

Lord and Lady W. excused themselves to breakfast, but came to dinner. We entertained one another with reports of what passed yesterday; what people said; how the tenants feast was managed; how the populace behaved at the houses which were kept open. The churchwardens list was produced of the poor recommended by them: it amounted to upwards of 140, divided into two classes; one of the acknowledged poor, the other of poor house-

keepers and labouring people who were ashamed to apply; but to whom the churchwardens knew bounty would be acceptable. There were above thirty of these, to whom Sir Charles gave very handsomely, but we knew not what. The churchwardens, who are known to be good men, went away blessing him, with hearts running over at their lips, as if they themselves were to find their account in his goodness.

Saturday.

We have had a smart debate this morning, on the natural independency of our sex, and the usurpation of the other. Particulars by-and-by.

My brother is an irresistible man. To-morrow he has carried it to make his appearance at church, against all their first intentions, and that by their own consents. He had considered every-thing: they had not. Mr. Beauchamp has letters which require him to go up to town: Lord and Lady W. are desirous to get thither: his lordship having some gouty warnings: I am obliged to go up; having hated to set about any-thing preparatory to your case, Caroline! [If the wretch were to come in my way just now, I should throw my standish at him, I believe.] The Earl and Lady Gertrude are in town; and I am afraid of another reprimand. The earl never jests but he means the same as if he were serious. I shall take Emily with me, when I go. Mrs. Reeves wants to be with her little boy. Yet all these people are desirous to credit the appearance.—I had like to have forgot your good man—He longs to see his Caroline; and hopes to engage my brother to stand in person as his urchin's sponsor. So you see that there is a necessity to consent to make the appearance to-morrow, or t[he] bride will lose the flower of her company.

God continue the happiness of this charming pair! Their behaviour to each other is just what I would wish it to be; tender, affectionate, without fulsome fondness. He cannot be more respectful to the dear creature now, than he was before marriage: but from his present behaviour, I dare answer for him, that he will not be less so: and yet he is so lively, that he has all *the young man* in his behaviour, whenever occasions call for relaxation; even when subjects require seriousness, as they do sometimes, in conversations between Mrs. Shirley, Mrs. Selby, Mr. Deane, and him; his seriousness, as Mrs. Shirley herself observed in his absence, is attended with such vivacity, and intermingled with such entertaining illustrations, all naturally arising from and falling into the subject, that he is sure of every one's attention and admiration.

The features of his manly face, and the turn of his fine eye, observed she, on another occasion, are *cast* for pity, and not for censure. And let me add a speech of his, when he was called upon to censure a person, on a slight representation of facts: 'The whole matter is not before us, said he: we know not what motives he may have to plead by way of extenuation, though he may not be able entirely to excuse himself. But, as it appears to me, I would not have done so.'

But what, my dear, am I about? Are they not my brother's praises that I am expatiating upon? Was I ever to be trusted with that subject? Is there no man, I have been asked, that is like your brother?—He, I have answered, is most likely to resemble him, who has an unbounded charity, and universal benevolence, to men of all professions; and who, imitating the Divinity, regards the heart, ther than the head, and much more than either or fortune, though it were princely; and yet is

not a leveller, but thinks that rank or degree intitles a man who is not utterly unworthy of both, to respect.

I will write one more letter, and then give way to other affairs.

I never thought I should have been such a scribbler. But the correspondence between my brother and Dr. Bartlett; into which we were all so eager to peep; that of this dear creature with her Lucy, which so much entertained us, and which led us, in her absence, to wish to continue the series of it; the story of Clementina so interesting; all our suspenses so affecting; and the state of this our lovely friend's heart so peculiar; and the desire of amusing you in your confinement: all these, together, led me on. But now one letter more shall conclude my task.

Lord L. has just now mentioned to his brother his wishes that he would stand godfather to the little lord. My brother caught his hand, and besought his pardon for not offering *himself*. You do me, my dear lord, said he, both honour and pleasure. Where was my thought? But this dear creature, turning to his bride, will be so good as to remind me of all my imperfections. I am in a way to mend; for the duties inseparable from my delightful new engagement will strengthen all my other duties.

I have taken upon me, Sir, said she, to request the favour of my Lord and Lady L.'s acceptance of me for a godmother.

To which I have objections, said I. I have a prior claim. Aunt Eleanor has put in hers, Lady W. hers; and this before Miss Byron was *Lady Grandison*.

Your circumstance, my dear Lady G. according to a general observation of our sex, is prohibitory.

Will you, my brother, appealed I, allow of superstitious observances, prognostics, omens, dreams?

O no! My Harriet has been telling me how much she suffered lately from a dream, which she permitted to give strength and terror to her apprehensions from Mr. Greville. Guard, my dear ladies, against these imbecilities of tender minds. In these instances, if in no other, will you give a superiority to our sex, which, in the debate of this morning, my Charlotte would not allow of.

I will begin my next letter with an account of this debate; and if I cannot comprise it in the compass I intend to bring it into, my one more letter may perhaps stretch into two.

LETTER LV.

LADY G. IN CONTINUATION.

The debate I mentioned, began on Saturday morning at breakfast-time; brought on by some of uncle Selby's good-natured particularities; for he will always have something to say against women. I bespoke my brother's neutrality, and declared I would enter the lists with Mr. Selby, and allow all the other men present to be of his side. I had a flow of spirits. Man's usurpation, and woman's natural independency, was the topic. I carried on my argument very triumphantly: now-and-then a sly hint, popt out by my brother, half-disconcerted me; but I called him to order, and he was silent: yet once he had like to have put me out—Wrapping his arms about himself, with inimitable humour—O my Charlotte, said he, how I love my country!

ENGLAND is the *only* spot in the world, in which *this* argument *can* be properly debated!—Very sly —Was it not?

I made nothing of Mr. Selby. I called him the tyrant of the family. And as little of Mr. Deane, Lord L. and still less of my own lord, who was as eager in the debate as if it concerned him more than any-body to resist me; and this before my brother; who by his eyes, more than once, seemed to challenge me, because of the sorry creature's earnestness. All those, however, were men of straw, with me; and I thought myself very near making Mr. Selby ask pardon of his dame for his thirty years usurpation. In short, I had half-established our sex's superiority on the ruin of that of the sorry fellows, when the debate was closed, and referred to Mrs. Shirley, as moderatrix; my brother still excluded any share in it.—She indeed obliged me to lower my topsails a little.

'I think, said the venerable lady, women are generally too much considered as a species apart. To be sure, in the duties and affairs of life, where they have different or opposite shares allotted them by Providence, they ought not to go out of their own sphere, or invade the men's province, any more than the men theirs. Nay, I am so much of this opinion, that though I think the confidence which some men place in their wives, in committing all their affairs to their care, very flattering to the opinion both of their integrity and capacity; yet I should not choose (without considering trouble) to interfere with the management without-doors, which I think more properly the man's province, unless in some particular cases.

'But in common intercourse and conversation, why are we to be perpetually considering the *sex* of

the person we are talking to? Why must women always be addressed in an appropriated language; and not treated on the common footing of reasonable creatures? And why must they, from a false notion of modesty, be afraid of shewing themselves to *be such*, and affect a childish ignorance?

'I do not mean, that I would have women enter into learned disputes, for which they are rarely qualified: but I think there is a degree of knowledge very compatible with their duties; therefore not unbecoming them, and necessary to make them fit companions for men of sense: a character in which they will always be found more useful than that of a plaything, the amusement of an idle hour.

'No person of sense, man or woman, will venture to launch out on a subject with which they are not well acquainted. The *lesser* degree of knowledge will give place to the *greater*. This will secure subordination enough. For the advantages of education which men must necessarily have over women, if they have made the proper use of them, will have set them so forward on the race, that we can never overtake them. But then don't let them despise us for this, as if their superiority were entirely founded on a natural difference of capacity: despise us *as* women, and value themselves merely *as* men: for it is not the hat or cap which covers the head, that decides the merit of it.

'In the general course of the things of this world, women have not opportunities of sounding the depths of science, or of acquainting themselves perfectly with polite literature: but this want of opportunity is not entirely confined to *them*. There are professions among the men no more favourable

to these studies, than the common avocations of women. For example; Merchants, whose attention is (and perhaps, with regard to the public, more usefully) chained down to their accounts. Officers, both of land and sea, are seldom much better instructed, though they may, perhaps, pass through a few more forms: and as for knowledge of the world, women of a certain rank have an equal title to it with some of them. A learned man, as he is called, who should despise a sensible one of these professions, and disdain to converse with him, would pass for a pedant; and why not for despising or undervaluing a woman of sense, who may be put on the same footing? Men, in common conversation, have laid it down for a rule of good breeding, not to talk before women of things they don't understand; by which means an opportunity of improvement is lost; a very good one too; one that has been approved by the ablest persons who have written on the education of children; because it is a means of learning insensibly, without the appearance of a task. Common subjects afford only commonplace, and are soon exhausted: why, then, should conversation be confined to such narrow limits, and be liable to continual repetition; when, if people would start less beaten subjects, many doubts and difficulties concerning them might be cleared up, and they would acquire a more settled opinion of things (which is what the generality much want, from an indolence that hinders them from examining) at the same time that they would be better entertained, than with talking of the weather, and such kind of insipidities.'

Lady W. applauding Mrs. Shirley's sentiments, A-propòs, said she; let me read you the speech (taking it out of her pocket-book) of an East-India

officer, to a pedant, who had been displaying his talents, and running over with terms of art, and scraps of Latin, mingled with a profusion of words, that hardly any of the company understood; and which, at the same time that it diverted all present, cured the pretended scholar of his affectation for ever after. Her ladyship read it, as follows:

'I am charmed with this opportunity, said the officer, of discoursing with a gentleman of so much wit and learning; and hope I shall have his decision in a point which is pretty nice, and concerns some eastern manufactures, of ancient and reverend etymology. Modern critics are undetermined about them; but, for my part, I have always maintained, that *chints*, *bullbulls*, *morees*, and *ponabaguzzy's*, are of nobler and more generous uses than *doorguzees* or *nourfurmannys*: not but I hold against *byrampauts* in favour of *niccannees* and *boralchauders*. Only I wish, that so accurate a judge would instruct me, why *tapzils* and *sallampores* have given place to *neganepauts*? And why *bejatapoutz* should be more esteemed than the finer fabric of *blue chelloes** ?'

A very good rebuke of affectation, said Sir Charles (and your ladyship hints it was an efficacious one). It serves to shew, that men, in their different attainments, may be *equally* useful; in other words, that the knowledge of polite literature leads not to *every* part of useful science. I remember, that my Harriet distinguishes very properly, in some of her letters to her Lucy, between *language* and *science;* and that poor Mr. Walden (that I think was his name) was pretty much disconcerted, as a

* Transcribed from a collection of papers, intitled, The Plain-dealer, in two Vols. Vol. I. No. 37.

pedant may sometimes be, when (and he bowed to his Harriet) he has a *natural genius* to contend with. She blushed, and bowed—And I remember, Sir, said she, you promised to give me your animadversions on the letters I consented you should see: Will you be pleased to correct me now?

Correct you, my dearest life!—What a word is that? I remember, that, in the conversation in which you were obliged, against your will, to bear so considerable a part, you demonstrated, that genius, without deep learning, made a much more shining figure, in conversation, than learning without genius: but, upon the whole, I was a little apprehensive, that true learning might suffer, if languages were too slightly treated. Mr. Walden made one good observation, or rather remembered it, for it was long ago made, and will be always of weight, that the knowledge of languages, any more than the advantage of birth, was never thought lightly of by those who had pretensions to either. The knowledge of the Latin language, in particular, let me say, is of singular use in the mastery of every science.

There are who aver, that men of parts have no occasion for learning: but, surely, our Shakespeare himself, one of the greatest geniuses of any country or age (who, however, is an adept in the superior learning, the knowledge of nature) would not have been a sufferer, had he had that greater share of human learning which is denied him by some critics.

But, Sir Charles, said Mr. Deane, don't you think that Shakespeare, who lived before the great Milton, has an easier, pleasanter, and more intelligible manner of writing, than Milton? If so, may it not be owing to Milton's greater learning, that Shakespeare

has the advantage of that immortal poet in perspicuity?

Is the fact certain, my dear Mr. Deane, that Milton wants perspicuity? I have been bold enough sometimes to think, that he makes a greater display of his reading, than was quite necessary to his unbounded subject. But the age, in which Shakespeare flourished, might be called, The age of English learning, as well as of English bravery. The queen and her court, the very ladies of it, were more learned than any court of our English sovereigns was before, or hath been since. What a prodigy of learning, in the short reign of Edward the VIth, was the Lady Jane Grey!—Greek, as well as Latin, was familiar to her: so it was to Queen Elizabeth. And can it be supposed, that the natural geniuses of those ladies were more confined, or limited, for their knowledge of Latin and Greek? Milton, though a little nearer us, lived in harsher and more tumultuous times.

O, Sir! said Harriet, then I find I was a very impertinent creature in the conversation to which you refer.

Not so, my dearest love!—Mr. Walden, I remember, says, that learning in that assembly was not brought before a fair tribunal. He should have known, that it had not a competent advocate in him.

But, Sir Charles, said Mr. Beauchamp, I cannot but observe, that too much stress is laid upon learning, as it is called, by those who have pretensions to it. You will not always find, that a scholar is a more happy man than an unlearned one. He has not *generally* more prudence, more wisdom, in the management of his affairs.

What, my dear Beauchamp, is this but saying,

that there is great difference between theory and practice? This observation comes very generously, and, with regard to the ladies, very gallantly, from you, who are a learned man: but as you are also a very prudent man, let me ask you, Do you think you have the less prudence for your learning? If *not*, Is not learning a valuable *addition?*

But pray, Sir Charles, said Mrs. Selby, let me ask your opinion: Do you think, that if women had the same opportunities, the same education, as men, they would not equal them in their attainments?

Women, my dear Mrs. Selby, are women sooner than men are men. They have not, therefore, *generally*, the learning-time that men have, if they had equal geniuses.

'*If* they had equal geniuses,' brother! Very well. My dear sister Harriet, you see you have given your hand to one of the lords of the creation—Vassal! bow to your sovereign.

Sir Ch. My dearest love, take not the advice without the example.

Lady G. Your servant, Sir. Well, but let me ask you, Do you think that there is a natural inferiority in the faculties of the one sex? A natural superiority in those of the other?

Sir Ch. Who will answer this question for me?

Not I, said Lord L. Not I, said Mr. Deane. Not I, said Mr. Beauchamp.

Then I have fairly taken you in—You would, if you could, answer it in the ladies favour: this is the same as a confession. I may therefore the more boldly pronounce, that, generally speaking, I have no doubt but there is.

Help me, dear ladies, said I, to fight this battle out. You say, Sir, you have no doubt that there

is a natural inferiority in the faculties of us, poor women; a natural superiority in you, imperial men.

Generally speaking, Charlotte. Not individually *you*, ladies, and *us* men: I believe all we who are present, shall be ready to subscribe to your superiority, ladies.

I believe, brother, you fib: but let that pass.

Thank you, madam. It is for *my* advantage that it should; and perhaps for *yours*, smiling—There is a difference, pardon me, ladies, we are speaking *generally*, in the *constitution*, in the *temperament*, of the two sexes, that gives to the one advantages which it denies to the other: but we may not too closely pursue this subject, though the result, I am apt to believe, would put the matter out of dispute. Let us be more at large: Why has nature made a difference in the beauty, proportion, and symmetry, in the *persons* of the two sexes? Why gave it delicacy, softness, grace, to that of the woman—as in the ladies before me; strength, firmness, to men; a capacity to bear labour and fatigue; and courage, to protect the other? Why gave it a distinction, both in qualities and plumage, to the different sexes of the feathered race? Why in the courage of the male and female animals?—The surly bull, the meek, the beneficent, cow, for one instance?

We looked upon one another.

There are exceptions to general rules, proceeded he. Mrs. Shirley surpasses all the men I ever knew, in wisdom—Mrs. Selby and Lady G.—

What of us, brother! What of us,—to the advantage of your argument?

Heroic Charlotte!—You are both very happily married—The men the women, the women the men, you can mutually assist and improve each other. But still—

Your servant, brother, interrupted I.—Your servant, Sir Charles, said Mrs. Selby.—And *I* say, Your servant, too, said Mr. Selby.

Who sees not that my sister Charlotte is ready to disclaim the competition in fact, though not in words? Can there be characters more odious than those of a masculine woman, and an effeminate man? What are the distinguishing characteristics of the two sexes? And whence this odiousness? There are, indeed, *men*, whose minds, if I may be allowed the expression, seem to be cast in a female mould; whence the fops, foplings, and pretty fellows, who buzz about your sex at public places; *women*, whose minds seem to be cast in a masculine one; whence your Barnevelts, my dear, and most of the women who, at such places, give the men stare for stare, swing their arms, look jolly; and those married women who are so kind as to take the reins out of their husbands' hands, in order to save the honest men trouble.

Your servant, Sir—Your servant, Sir—And some of them looked as if they had said, You cannot mean me, I hope; and those who spoke not, bowed and smiled thanks for his compliment to one fourth of the sex.

My lord insultingly rubbed his hands for joy; Mr. Selby crowed; the other men slily smiled, though they were afraid of giving a more open approbation.

O my sister! said I, taking Harriet's hand, we women are mere nothings—We are nothing at all!

How, my Charlotte! Make you no difference between being every-thing and nothing?

Were it not, my dear ladies, proceeded he, for male protectors, to what insults, to what outrages, would not your sex be subject? Pardon me, my dear, if I strengthen my argument by your excellencies, bowing to his Harriet. Is not the dear

creature our good Mrs. Shirley's own daughter? All the feminine graces are hers. She is, in my notion, what all women should be—But wants she not a protector? Even a dream, a reverie—

O Sir, spare me, spare me! sweetly blushing, said the lovely Harriet. I own I should have made a very silly, a very pusillanimous man! It is not long since, you know, Lady G. that I brought this very argument in favour of—

Hush, Harriet! You will give up the female cause.

That is not fair, Charlotte, rejoined my brother; you should not intercept the convictions of an ingenuous mind—But I *will* spare my Harriet, if she will endeavour, for her own sake, to let nothing disturb her for the future but *realities*, and not any of *those* long, if they are inevitable ones.

But pray, Sir, said I, proceed in your argument, if you have any more to say.

O Charlotte! I have enough to say, to silence all your opposition, were I to give this subject its due weight. But we are only, for pleasantry-sake, skimming over the surface of the argument. Weaker powers are given generally for weaker purposes, in the œconomy of Providence. I, however, disapprove not of our venerable Mrs. Shirley's observation; That we are apt to consider the sex *too much* as a species apart: yet it is my opinion, that both God and nature have designed a very apparent difference in the minds of both, as well as in the peculiar beauties of their persons. Were it not so, their offices would be confounded, and the women would not perhaps so readily submit to those domestic ones in which it is their province to shine, and the men would be allotted the distaff, or the needle; and you yourselves, ladies, would be the first to despise such. I would only contend, that we men

should have power and right given us to protect and serve your sex; that we should purchase and build for them; travel and toil for them; run through, at the call of Providence, or of our king and country, dangers and difficulties; and, at last, lay all our trophies, all our acquirements, at your feet; enough rewarded in the consciousness of duty done, and your favourable acceptance.

We were all of us again his humble servants. It was in vain to argue the tyranny of some husbands, when he could turn upon us the follies of some wives; and that wives and daughters were never more faulty, more undomestic, than at present; and when we were before a judge, who, though he could not be absolutely unpolite, would not flatter us, nor spare our foibles.

However, it stuck a little with Harriet, that she had given cause to Sir Charles, in the dispute which she formerly bore a part in, relating to learning and languages*, to think her more lively than she ought to be, and had spoken too lightly of languages. She sweetly blushing, like a young wife solicitous for the good opinion of the beloved of her heart, revived that cause.

He spoke very highly in her praise, upon the occasion; owned, that the letters he had been favoured with the sight of, had given him deeper impressions in her favour, than even her beauty: hoped for farther communications; applauded her for her principles, and her inoffensive vivacity—That sweet, that innocent vivacity, and noble frankness of heart, said he, taking her hand, which I hope you will never think of restraining.

As to the conversation you speak of, proceeded he, I repeat, that I *was* apprehensive, when I read

* See Vol. I. p. 70.

it, that languages were spoken of in it slightly; and yet, perhaps, I am mistaken. You, my Beauchamp, I think, if my dearest life will oblige us both by the communication, and *chooses* to do so (for that must be the condition on which all her goodness to us must be expected) shall be judge between us: you know, better than I, what stores of unexhausted knowledge lie in the works of those great ancients, which suffered in the hands of poor Mr. Walden: you know what the past and present ages have owed, and what all future will owe, to *Homer*, *Aristotle*, *Virgil*, *Cicero*: you can take in the necessity there is of restraining innovation, and preserving old rules and institutions, and of employing the youth of our sex, who would otherwise be much worse employed (as we see in those who neglect their studies) in the attainment of languages that can convey to them such lights in every science: though it were to be wished, that morals should take up more of the learner's attention than they generally do. You know, that the truest parts of learning are to be found in the Roman and Greek writers; and you know, that translation (were every-thing worthy our notice translated) cannot convey those beauties which scholars only can relish; and which learned foreigners, if a man travels, will expect should not have escaped his observation. As to the ladies, Mrs. Shirley has admirably observed, that there is a degree of knowledge very compatible with their duties (Condescending excellence! bowing to Mrs. Shirley) and highly becoming them; such as will make them rejoice, and, I will add, improve a man of sense, sweeten his manners, and render him a much more sociable, a much more amiable creature, and of consequence, greatly more happy in himself, than otherwise he would be from books and solitude.

Well but, brother, you said just now, that we were only, for pleasantry-sake, skimming over the surface of the argument; and that you had enough to say to silence all my opposition, were you to give the subject its due weight. I do assure you, that, to silence all my opposition, you must have a vast deal more to say, than you have said hitherto; and yet you have thrown in some hints which stick with me, though you have concluded with some magnificent intimations of superiority over us—Power and right to protect, travel, toil for us, and lay your trophies at our feet, and-so-forth—Surely, surely, this is diminishing us, and exalting yourselves, by laying us under high obligations to your generosity. Pray, Sir, let us have, if you please, one or two intimations of those weightier arguments, that could, as you fancy, silence your Charlotte's opposition. I say, that we women, were our education the same —You know what I would be at—Your *weightier* arguments, if you please—or a specimen only *en passant.*

Supposing, my Charlotte, that all human souls are, in themselves, equal; yet the very design of the different machines in which they are inclosed, is to superinduce a temporary difference on their original equality; a difference adapted to the different purposes for which they are designed by Providence in the present transitory state. When those purposes are at an end, this difference will be at an end too. When sex ceases, inequality of souls will cease; and women will certainly be on a foot with men, as to intellectuals, in heaven. There, indeed, will you no longer have *lords* over you; neither will you have *admirers:* which, in *your* present estimate of things, will perhaps balance the account. In the mean time, if you can see any

occasions that may call for stronger understandings in male life, than in your own; you, at the same time, see an argument to acquiesce in a persuasion of a present inequality between the two sexes. You know, I have allowed exceptions. Will you, Charlotte, compliment yourself with being one?

Now, brother, I feel, methinks, that you are a little hard upon Charlotte: but, ladies, you see how the matter stands.—You are all silent.—But, Sir, you graciously allow, that there *is* a degree of knowledge which is very compatible with the DUTIES of us women, and highly *becoming* us: Will you have the goodness to point out to us what this compatible learning is, that we may not mistake—and so become excentric, as I may say, burst our orb, and do more mischief than ever we could do good?

Could I point out the boundaries, Charlotte, it might not to *some* spirits be so proper: the limit might be treated as the one prohibited tree in the garden. But let me say, That genius, whether in man or woman, will push itself into light. If it has a laudable tendency, let it, as a ray of the Divinity, be encouraged, as well in the one sex as in the other: I would not, by any means, have it limited: a little knowledge leads to vanity and conceit. I would only, methinks, have a parent, a governor, a preceptor, bend his strength to restrain its foibles; but not throw so much cold water upon the sacred flame as should quench it; since, if he did, stupidity, at least dejection, might take place of the emanation, and the person might be miserable for life.

Well, then, we must *compromise*, I think, said I. But, on recollection, I thought I had injoined you, Sir Charles, to the observance of a neutrality. Har-

riet, whispered I, we are only, after all, to be allowed, as far as I can find, in this temporary state, like tame doves, to go about house, and-so-forth.

Harriet, could she have found time (but, by mutual consent, they are hardly ever asunder) would have given you a better account of this conversation than I have done; so would Lucy: but take it, as it offers, from

Your ever-affectionate

CHARLOTTE G.

LETTER LVI.

MISS LUCY SELBY TO LADY L.

Sunday, November 19.

MY dear Lady G. insists upon my writing to your ladyship an account of the appearance which the loveliest couple in England made this day at church.

We all thought nothing could have added to the charms of our Harriet's person; but yet her dress and jewels did. I sighed, from pride for the honour of female beauty, to *think* they did. Can my dear Harriet, thought I, exquisitely lovely as she is in any dress, be ornamented by richer silks than common, by costly laces, by jewels? Can dress add grace to that admirable proportion, and those fine features, to which no painter yet has ever done justice, though every family related to her has a picture of her, drawn by a different hand of eminence?

We admired the bridegroom as much as we did her, when (before we could have thought he had been half ready) he joined Mrs. Shirley, my aunt Selby, and me, in the great parlour, completely

dressed. But what we most admired in him was, that native dignity and ease, and that inattentiveness to his own figure and appearance, which demonstrate the truly-fine gentleman, accustomed, as he is, to be always elegant.

When his lady presented herself to him, and to us, in all her glory, how did the dear creature dazzle us! We involuntarily arose, as if to pay our homage to her. Sir Charles approached her with rather an air of greater freedom than usual, as if he considered not the dress, as having added to the value he has for her: yet, Loveliest of women, he called her; and, taking her hand, presented her to her grandmamma: Receive, and again bless, my angel, said he, best of parents!—How lovely! But what is even all this amazing loveliness to the graces of her mind? They rise upon me every hour. She hardly opens her lips, but I find reason to bless God, and bless you both, my dear ladies: for God and you have given her goodness.—My dearest life, allow me to say, that this sweet person, which will be your first perfection in every stranger's eye, is but a second in mine.

Instruct me, Sir, said she, to *deserve* your love, by improving the mind you have the goodness to prefer; and no creature was ever on earth so happy as I shall be.

My dear daughter, said her delighted grandmother, you see, can hardly bear your goodness, Sir. You must blame her for something, to keep down her pride.

Now you call upon me, madam, replied he, I will tax her with a real fault. I open all my heart to her, as subjects occasionally offer: I want her to have a will, and to let me know it. The frankest of all female hearts will not treat me with that sweet familiarity which banishes distance. You see, my

dearest love, that I chide you before your parental friends, and your Lucy.

It is your own fault, Sir: indeed it is. You prevent me in all my wishes. Awe will mingle with the love of persons who are under perpetual obligation. My dear two mamma's, you must not blame *me*; you must blame Sir Charles: he takes away, by his goodness, even the *power* of making suitable acknowledgments, and then complains I do not speak.

My uncle Selby came in. He stood looking upon my cousin, for a few moments, in silence; then broke out, Sir Charles Grandison, you may indeed boast, that you have for a wife the *flower of the British world*, as you once called her: and, let me tell you, niece, you have for a husband the noblest and gallantest of men. Happy, happy pair! say I. My dear Mr. Deane, said he, who just then entered, if you will keep me in countenance, I will venture to salute that charming creature.

Sir Charles presented his bride to them both. With a bent knee she received their salutes. At that moment came in the three lords, who followed the example. Lord W. called her angel—Sir Charles looked delighted with the praises of his bride.

The rest of the company being come, we proceeded to church.

We were early; but the church was crowded. How were the charming couple admired on their alighting, and as they walked to their pew!—Never did my cousin *herself* look so lovely. How charmingly looked the bridegroom! But he forgot not that humble deportment, full of reverence for the place, and the divine offices, which seemed to make him absent for the time to that splendor and beauty which took every eye *out of* our own pew. His

example was enough to give a proper behaviour, had it been needful, to every one *in it.*

I should have told your ladyship, that Mr. Greville had sent, over-night, a sullenly-complaisant request to my aunt, in writing, importing that as he heard the bride would make her appearance on the morrow, the bride-men and maids, if it broke not into our ceremonial, would accept of his pew, which is over-against ours, for the *look* of the thing, he said; though he could not promise but he should all the day curse the occasion. By this we found, he was not gone to Lady Frampton's, as he had designed. His offer was thankfully accepted.

There was a great concourse of the genteelest people there. Every-body, men and women, looked delighted on the occasion. The humility of the bride was tried, by the respects paid her between the offices, by all who had ever been in her company. They should have reined in her own pride; for it was to *that*, as much as to respect to her, I doubt not, that their notice was owing. She looked conscious, bashful; *sly*, I told her afterwards. She hates the word: but, as I said, she should not have given the idea, that made no other word so proper to express it, and which must be more observable in *her* generally open free countenance, than in that of any other. She more than once saw devoirs paid her by a *leer*, when her sweet face was so disposed, that, had she *not* returned the compliment, it might have passed that she had not seen them. But what an insensible must have been my cousin, had she not been proud of being Lady Grandison! She is not quite an angel yet; she has a few *femalities*, as my uncle whimsically calls our little foibles. So, perhaps, she *should*. But nobody saw the least defect in your brother. His dress most charmingly became him; and when he looked upon his bride, his eyes were fixed on her eyes, with such a sweet benignity

and complaisance, as if he saw her mind through them, and could not spare a glance to her ornaments: yet by his own dress he shewed, that he was no stoical non-conformist to the fashion of the world. But the politeness and respect with which he treated her, did them both credit, and credit (as Lady G. observed) to the whole sex. Such unaffected tenderness in his respect; and known to be so brave, so good a man! O my dear Lady L. what an admirable man is your brother! What a happy creature is my Harriet!

When divine service was over, I was afraid our procession, as I may call it, would have been interrupted by the compliments of some of the gentry of our acquaintance, whose opened pew-doors shewed their readiness to address them: but all passed in silent respects from gentlemen and ladies. My cousin, when she came home, rejoiced that one of her parading times was over: But when, my dearest love, said Sir Charles, will the time be past, that all who see you will admire you?

The church in the afternoon was still more crowded than before. How were Sir Charles and my uncle blessed by the poor, and people of low degree, for their well-dispensed bounty to them!

My cousin has delighted Mrs. Shirley, by telling her, that Sir Charles had said there would be a rite wanting, till he and she had communicated, according to the order of the church, at the altar, on this particular occasion.

Just now is every-thing settled that Sir Charles wished to be settled. Lady G. will acquaint you with particulars, I doubt not.

Permit me to commend myself to your ladyship's favour, as one of the

Humblest and sincerest of your servants,

LUCY SELBY.

P. S. Lady G. has half broke my heart.

On perusal of what I have written, she says, I have not done my best: I have not given half particulars enough.—In short, she find a multitude of faults with me—Even calls me names, *sorry girl*, *lazy*, and I can't tell what.

But do you, madam, acquit me, and I shall be easy.

I told her, that I thought I had been very minute.

What! to a lying-in woman, she says, who has no variety before her! All one dull chamber-scene, hourly acted over again—The subject *so* rich!

I answered, It should then have had the richest pen!—Why did she not write *herself?* If it was *not* for laziness-sake, it was for self-sake, that she did not. As I knew Lady L. would have been a gainer by the change of pen, I had much rather have been in the company for which she quitted the task, than grubbing pens in my closet; and all to get nothing but discommendation.

I have shewn her this my postscript. She raves: but I am hardened. She will soon have an opportunity to supply all my defects, in person.

END OF VOL. VI.

TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL